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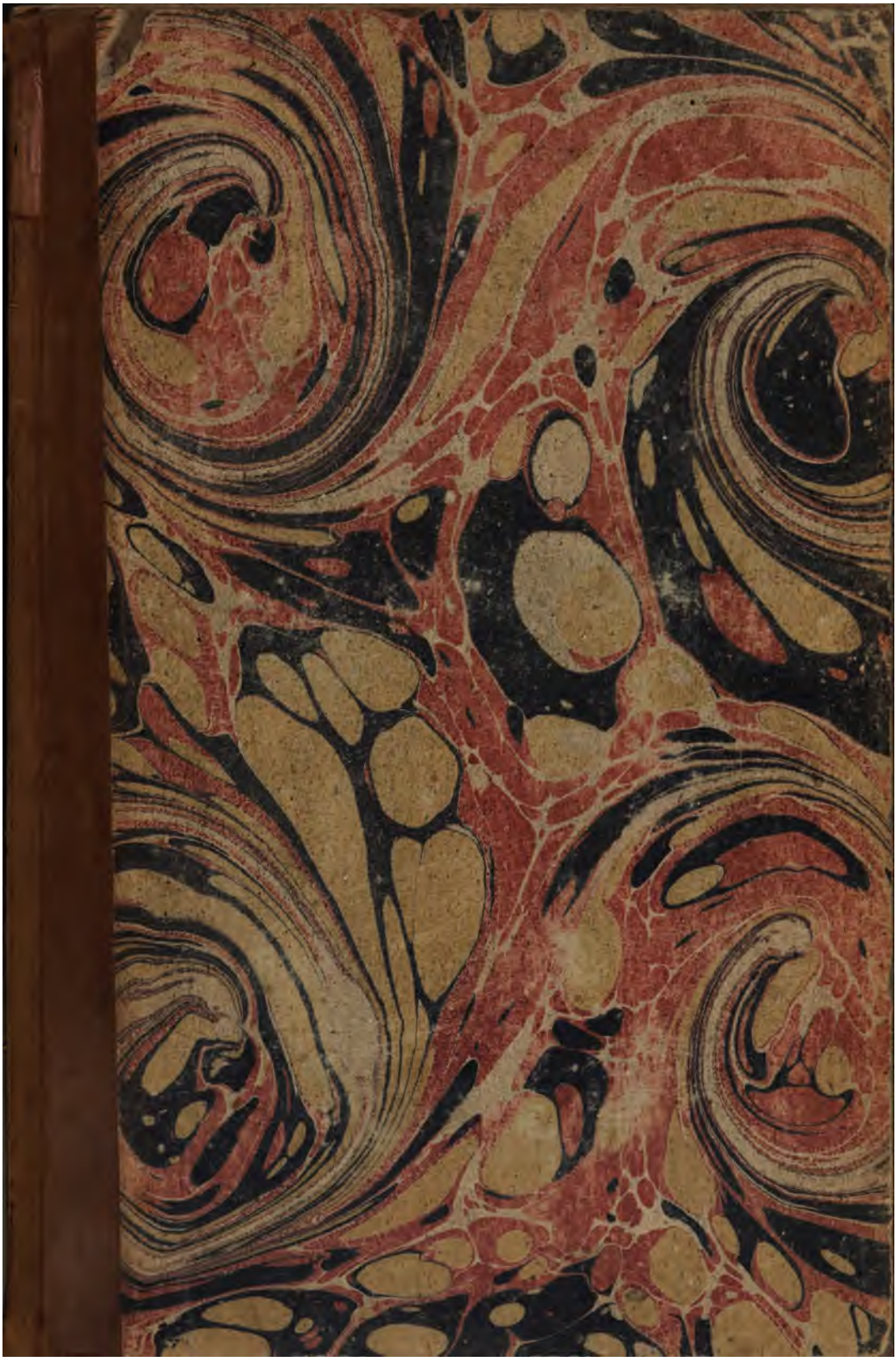

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CHARACTER,

MOTIVES, AND PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

ANTI-CORN LAW LEAGUERS,

WITH

A FEW GENERAL REMARKS

ON

THE CONSEQUENCES THAT WOULD RESULT FROM A FREE TRADE IN CORN.

DEDICATED TO W. R. GREG, ESQ.

BY

JOHN ALMACK, JUN.

"Why these individuals, some of them not originally perhaps of the most opulent class of the community, have, during the operation of these laws, amassed enormous fortunes; yet, during the whole of this period, they have never found an opportunity either of increasing the wages, or diminishing the toil, of their little labourers, to whom they owe every farthing they possess. They have constantly done the reverse. And they talk of Corn Laws as their apology. 'This is *too* bad.' Can any man be fool enough to suppose, that were the Corn Laws abolished to-morrow, and every grain we consume were grown and ground in foreign parts, that such individuals would cease to 'grind the faces of the poor.'"—M. T. SADLER.—(*June* 7, 1832.)

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JOHN OLLIVIER, 59, PALL MALL.
1843.

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CHARACTER, MOTIVES, AND PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

ANTI-CORN LAW LEAGUERS.

"The mean rapacity, and monopolizing spirit of merchants and manufacturers, who neither are, nor ought to be, the rulers of mankind, though it cannot perhaps be corrected, may very easily be prevented from disturbing the tranquillity of any body but themselves."—ADAM SMITH. *Wealth of Nations, Book* 4. *Chap.* 3.

"Why these individuals, some of them not originally perhaps of the most opulent class of the community, have, during the operation of these laws, amassed enormous fortunes; yet, during the whole of this period, they have never found an opportunity either of increasing the wages, or diminishing the toil, of their little labourers, to whom they owe every farthing they possess. They have constantly done the reverse. And they talk of Corn Laws as their apology. 'This is too bad.' Can any man be fool enough to suppose, that were the Corn Laws abolished to-morrow, and every grain we consume were grown and ground in foreign parts, that such individuals would cease to 'grind the faces of the poor.'"—M. T. SADLER.—(*June* 7, 1832.)

WHEN a deputation of the Anti-Corn Law League waited upon Sir James Graham, on the 19th of July last, Mr. Henry Ashworth said, "60,000 persons in Manchester, and 6,000 in Salford, had memorialized their representatives, requesting them to stop the supplies," (because the Corn Law had not been repealed) Sir J. Graham enquired, "how many amongst these 70,000 persons there were, who understood the subject?" A very proper question; and we should like to know, how many of those who rail against the Corn Laws thoroughly understand the nature and purpose of these laws, or the motives of the party who have raised the present clamour against them.

Without any pretence of being able to explain these difficult and puzzling questions, we will endeavour to set forth, as briefly as possible, such views and opinions thereon, as our limited means of observation have enabled us to form.

The present Earl Fitzwilliam once asked, in one of his declamations against the Corn Law, in the House of Lords,

"What is the object of this Law?" When another Noble Lord promptly replied, "To have the land cultivated, and the people fed." With this very concise, yet very comprehensive definition, we will leave the law itself for the present, and proceed to consider what is called the "agitation" against it.

The turbulent clamour which goes by the name of *agitation*, is raised and kept up by the systematic operations of a combination of wealthy individuals, connected with the cotton trade, which combination is styled by themselves THE ANTI-CORN-LAW LEAGUE. The fullest record of the proceedings of this party is to be found in the *Anti-Corn-Law Circular*, a publication in the form of a newspaper. As this Circular is the principal organ of the League, and under their immediate superintendence and direction, everything appearing therein has, we suppose, the sanction of that body, and their guarantee for correctness. We shall, therefore, in the observations we have to make on the League and its operations, draw our information, principally, from this source, in order to avoid any charge of making garbled or incorrect statements.

The Anti-Corn-Law Circular, No. 99, begins its leading article thus:—

"The members of the Anti-Corn-Law League *are, for the most part, manufacturers*, and it is natural, that they should apply themselves to the question they have taken in hand, with reference to its influence on their own pursuits, rather than take up any other branch of the subject."

The head and director of the Anti-Corn-Law League is a calico printer, of the name of Cobden, now M.P. for Stockport. This gentleman says, in a speech reported in No. 46 of the *Circular*:—

"I have no hesitation in saying, and I am proud to say it of the people of Manchester, that the League has been, in fact, the Manchester Anti-Corn-Law Association. We have had good assistance from Leeds, we have had good co-operation from other quarters, but the great fountain that has fed all the streams which have run through the country, irrigating it from one end to the other, has been the Manchester Anti-Corn-Law Association. And I tell you frankly, men of Manchester, it is from your purses, and your purses alone, that the great portion of the means must come, to carry forward this agitation."

The members of the Anti-Corn-Law League then are, for the most part, manufacturers, and resident chiefly in Manchester. They style themselves, in the Anti-Corn-Law Circular, "A holy League," "A patriotic band." They are influenced, they say, by "a high moral and religious feeling;" engaged in "a labour of love;" and their objects are to obtain "bread for the hungry," and to check "those monsters of impiety (the landlords) who tax the bread and grind the faces of the poor," &c. &c. Now if all this be correct, and if this band of Manchester manufacturers are impelled to the wonderful exertions they are now making in the way of agitation, by disinterested motives only, they surely do form what they state themselves to be, namely, "The most philanthropic institution the human mind ever conceived." And, if the honesty of their intentions be commensurate with the strength of their language, they certainly are the most angelic band that were ever brought together.

The Corn-Law they term monstrous abuse, indirect murder, corn-law robbery, idiotic cruelty, brazen iniquity, bayonet law, murderous enactment, fiendish system, manslaughtering, death-dealing, death-creating, scoundrel enactment; devil's law, atrocious, merciless, blasting, blasphemous, cursed, griping, execrable, infamous, impious, cruel, diabolical, nefarious, oppressive, immoral, anti-social, anti-Christian, famine, scoundrel, starvation law; iniquitous system, inhuman and fiendish policy, accursed monopoly of food, &c. &c. The landlords are called a bread-taxing oligarchy, a handful of swindlers; despicable, base, sordid, detestable, ruthless, unprincipled, beggarly, cruel, brutal, relentless, tyrannous, reckless, merciless, insatiable, voluptuous, unfeeling, haughty, bold, insolent, fleshmongering, proud, impudent, scoundrel, law-making landlords; parliamentary crew, pocket-picking fraternity, monsters, wretches, demons, knaves, thieves, bread-stealers, heartless band, rapacious harpies, labour-plunderers, monsters of impiety, foot-pad aristocracy, power-

proud plunderers, putrid and sensual banditti, titled felons, rich robbers, blood sucking vampires, plunderers of the people, &c. &c. The farmers, of course, come in for their portion: as, brute drudges, clodpates, hawbucks, bullfrogs, chawbacons, clodpoles, &c.

Before we place implicit confidence in the high pretensions of this self-righteous junto, we propose to inquire, in the first place, whether their conduct to their own workmen has uniformly been such, as to shew that they have always had the happiness of man in view; secondly, whether their object is not rather to obtain larger profits for themselves, than a larger "loaf for the hungry;" and thirdly, whether the League is not really more of an unconstitutional than a "holy" nature.

In entering on the first inquiry, we would entreat the reader's special attention to the admission of one, who is at the same time a principal manufacturer of Manchester, a principal member of the League, and otherwise distinguished as a repealer; but whose name we choose to withhold for the present. This gentleman, in a pamphlet published in 1842, says, (page 6,) "Up to the year 1836, trade was in a prosperous condition." An assertion which few will think of contradicting.

"Up to 1836," then, "trade was in a prosperous condition," and the manufacturers were, up to this time, busily engaged in gathering that wealth, which now, as they say, "overshadows the possessions of the aristocracy;" and during the greater part of this time, be it remembered, the Corn Laws were far more stringent than they are now. Let us see, then, what blessings these manufacturers shed around them, when in the full tide of their prosperity.

So long since as the year 1802 the late Sir Robert Peel exerted himself to procure a legislative enactment to regulate the hours of labour, &c., in factories; a measure which he described as urgently necessary, in order to protect the children and others from the grinding oppression of their employers. We shall pass

over his earlier efforts, and only notice those of a later date, as it will be sufficient to know, how far the manufacturers have been distinguished for their humane and liberal conduct to their workmen, during the existence of this very Corn-Law, which they have always been so anxious to repeal.

On the 19th February, 1818, he thus expressed himself in the House of Commons:—

"About 15 years ago, I brought in a bill for the regulation of apprentices in Cotton Manufactories. At that time they were the description of persons most employed in these manufactories. I myself had a thousand of them, and I felt the necessity of some regulation with respect to them * * *. It was notorious, that children of a very tender age were dragged from their beds some hours before daylight, and confined in the factories not less than 15 hours; and it is also, notoriously, the opinion of the faculty, that no children of 8 or 9 years of age can bear the degree of hardship with impunity to their health and constitution."

"Little children of very tender age are employed with grown persons at machinery, and these poor little creatures, torn from their beds, are compelled to work, even at the age of six years, from early morn till late at night—a space of perhaps 15 or 16 hours a day."—(*April* 3, 1816.)

Another person very nearly related to the foregoing, and now exercising the most important functions of the executive government, afforded his testimony as follows:—

"It is proved that children are employed in Lancashire 15 hours a day, and after any stoppage, from 5 in the morning to 10 in the evening, 17 hours; and this often three weeks at a time. On a *Sunday* they are employed from 6 in the morning to 12 in cleaning the machinery. It is in evidence that children are employed at as early an age as 5 years."—(*Feb.* 19, 1818.)

"Is it not disgusting to see that education which was intended to be the greatest of blessings converted into a curse by this mode of compelling the children to try and avail themselves of it after 13½ hours of fatigue, when, throughout the day, labour had drained from them every spring of action that could refresh their faculties, and benumb that elasticity of mind which could excite them to the pursuit of study?"—(*April* 27, 1818.)

The late Sir Robert Peel concluded a motion which he made on the subject in the following very expressive terms:—

"For these reasons I entreat the House to take into its serious consideration, and to go into the Committee for the purpose of seeing whether some means may not be devised for alleviating the hardships and sufferings of those little helpless and unprotected *victims of our* MANUFACTURING PROSPERITY."—(*April* 27, 1818.)

Let the reader mark the conclusion of the foregoing paragraph. Sir Robert Peel did not say, "those little helpless children, 5 and 6 years of age," were *victims* of the cursed

griping Corn Law. No! they were *victims* of *manufacturing prosperity*. They were victimised when "trade was in a prosperous condition;" and by those, who are now destroying the public peace with their pretended anxiety to "benefit the labouring poor."

The late Sir Robert Peel was as well acquainted, as any body, with manufacturing prosperity, and knew as well, who were the "victims" of it. These victims were sacrificed on the altar of Mammon—on Sundays too! and by the very men who now tell us their "hearts are beating with anxiety for the happiness of the human race," and that, they are "fighting in the armour of righteousness," for "the honour of God and the happiness of man."

If Sir Robert Peel was "disgusted" at the manufacturers rendering "education a curse," by draining from their *victims* "every spring of action," and "benumbing the elasticity of their minds," what must be the feeling excited now, when we hear the same men profess an uncontrollable desire to "educate twenty-seven millions of people?"

It will now be necessary, for the purpose of elucidating our inquiries, to make several extracts from the parliamentary records, as the source from which the most authentic information on this subject is to be derived.

LORD KENYON.—"The evidence given before the Committee shews, the injury that results to the health of the children, from being employed 14, 15 or 16 hours a day, in places heated to 80, 85, and nearly 90 degrees. There are amply sufficient facts, given in evidence, to prove, that the ill state of health of those children, arising from the number of hours they are kept at work, in the manner described, imperiously calls for a legislative interference, to prevent that *waste of human life*, which such a system produces."—(*House of Lords, June* 14, 1819.)

We must here observe, that the only impediment which the Parliament have had to encounter, in the various efforts they have felt it their duty to make, to restrain the cruelties of the manufacturers, towards the children in their employment, has been from the manufacturers themselves.

The grounds on which they have constantly fought the battle

of oppression, have been, that a less degree of cruelty inflicted on the children, would either prevent them (the manufacturers) from competing successfully with their foreign rivals, or take away a certain portion of their profits. The latter reason is noticed in the following extract:

MR. HOBHOUSE—(the radical, free-trade, Corn-law-repealing Hobhouse.)—"In the *best regulated* mills the children are at present compelled to work 12½ hours a day, and for three or four days in the week are not allowed to go out of the mills to get their meals, which they are obliged to take off the floor of the mills, mingled with the dust and down of the cotton. In *other mills* they are obliged to work 15 and 16 hours a day. Now, *is it possible for children to live*, who are daily suffering under an atmosphere, the temperature of which is warmer than the warmest summer days? They scarcely bear any resemblance to their fellow creatures after being long subject to this torture. Their skins are literally the colour of parchment. My Honourable friend says, that, if the Bill passes (to limit the hours of labour) *"we shall lose two millions and a half of productive revenue."* But ought we to allow a portion of our fellow subjects to be rendered miserable for such a consideration? No, it would be better to give up the cotton trade altogether, than to draw such a sum out of the blood, and bones, and sinews of these unfortunate children."—(*House of Commons, May* 16, 1825.)

Now this was spoken in the year 1825, when, as it was said, our manufacturers were "mad with prosperity." The year in which, as Huskisson said, our prosperity was such that "the whole world was ransacked for raw materials to give employment to their manufactures, and it seemed as if they would never get enough, either of building materials for the vast number of new factories that were commenced, or of the articles necessary to put them in operation." Now, what were the Holy Leaguers doing then, we wonder? They tell us at this time, that their object is the "happiness of millions:" it is therefore fair to presume, that, when they were "mad with prosperity," the immediate instruments of that prosperity, their own work-people, were mad with happiness. Let us see.—

SIR F. BURDETT.—"We hear of slavery abroad, but good God! have we ever heard of any such instance of over-working, as has been published with respect to the labour of the children in the cotton factories? Why, has any man a horse that he can think of putting to such toil? It is shocking to humanity, and it becomes still more odious, when it is considered, that these children, if they chance to be overpowered by sleep, are beaten by the spinners, until they awake, and resume their labours. It is impossible to imagine any case which calls more loudly for the interference of the legislature. * * * Such employment of children is scandalous. It is shocking to humanity. I know not a more crying evil, or one that calls more loudly for the interference of Parliament."—(*May* 16, 1825.)

MR. W. SMITH.—"This act (late Sir R. Peel's, to limit hours of labour in factories,) has been evaded in the most shameless, barefaced, and inhuman manner." (*May* 16, 1825.)

"No one can reprobate the system of slavery more than I do, but the labour performed by the negroes in the West Indies is actually less than is exacted from those poor children at Manchester, and is far less detrimental to health." (*May* 21, 1825.)

We should like to know where the "armour of righteousness" was in those times, and who were then defending the poor man from the "sordid," "tyrannous," "fleshmongering," landlords. The COBDENS, the BROOKSES, the BRIGHTS, &c. now tell us, "they are surrounded by scenes of want and misery over which their hearts have long mourned, with the power of affording little beyond the consolation of mere words;" but did they mourn over the white slavery which surrounded them in 1825? Had they not then the means of affording something "beyond the consolation of mere words," when they were gathering their plums almost faster than they could count them? But what did they do?

MR. HUSKISSON.—"I have seen, and many other gentlemen no doubt have seen, in a Macclesfield newspaper of the 19th February, 1825, the following advertisement.—'To overseers, guardians of the poor, and families desirous of settling in Macclesfield; wanted immediately from 4,000 to 5,000 persons.' (Hear, hear.) The House may well express their surprise, and I beseech their attention to the description of persons required by this advertisement; 'from seven to twenty years of age,' so that the manufacturers were content to receive children of the tender age of only seven years, 'to be employed in the throwing and manufacturing of silk; the great increase of the trade having caused a great scarcity of workmen. It is suggested that this is a most favourable opportunity for persons with large families, and overseers who wish to put out children—children of seven years of age—as apprentices to ensure them a comfortable livelihood. Applications to be made, if by letter, POST-PAID, to the printer of this paper." (*Feb.* 26, 1826.)

The tail-piece of this precious affair gives it a pungency and a raciness that is really refreshing. How truly characteristic of the grasping slave-driving Millocrat! for, although mad with prosperity, he was too sensible to overlook the fourpenny, or at most, the elevenpenny matter of postage, even when negotiating for the purchase of 5000 of his fellow creatures.

Of the same tenor is the following, though of earlier date.

MR. R. GORDON.—"It appears, that overseers of parishes, in London, are in the habit of contracting with the manufactnrers of the north, for the disposal of their children; and these manufacturers agree to take one idiot for every nineteen sane children. In this manner waggon loads of these little creatures are sent down to be at the perfect disposal of their new masters." (*April* 3, 1816.)

Now, Reader, if you will just give your special attention for a few pages, you shall know what kind of stuff the Leaguers are made of—how their enormous wealth has been accumulated—how those "merchant princes" treat the unhappy beings that have to hang upon their favours—and what right they have to call other people "monsters," "tyrants," "brutes," "fiends," &c. The following is from the lips of one who was bred, educated, and who spent nearly all his life in one of the largest manufacturing towns, and who had consequently gained a most intimate and extensive knowledge of all the lights and shadows of manufacturing life, by having been an every day observer of it.

Mr. M. T. SADLER.—"Children of very tender years work for 12, 13, 15, and 16 hours a day, and often for 35 hours without intermission, save only a few minutes for meals."—(H. C. *Feb.* 1, 1832.)

"They are kept at labour," to use their own phrase, "7 or 8 days a week." * * * In many instances they are employed on the Sabbath."—(*Feb.* 7, 1832.)

Was the "accursed Corn Law" the cause of this, or did the "brutal landlords" order it? No! the "*Holy Leaguers*"—the "Holy Leaguers." It was done to minister to the insatiable rapacity of the "Holy Leaguers." Again—

"They (speaking of the Huddersfield petitioners—10,000) state, that they are confined, or imprisoned, in a heated and pernicious atmosphere, for 12, 16, and 18 hours together; that sometimes they are at work the whole of the night, and that, in some weeks, they are not allowed more than two or three nights rest in the seven. "*I* (MR. SADLER) *can assure the House from my own knowledge, that the allegations in the petitions are strictly true.*"—(*March* 7, 1832.)

"Some Honourable Gentlemen have said, 'let the House not be run away with by excited feelings;' my only fear is, that the House may be run away with by other than humane and parental feelings, namely, by *sordid* and *selfish* considerations ill understood, and cruelly applied."—(*Feb.* 9, 1832.)

"I do not deny that these persons (the masters) *possess great wealth*, and are also highly respectable individuals, but I think they ought to have *some regard* for the *poor individuals through whom they accumulated that wealth.*"—(*March* 7, 1832.)

"The condition of the operative manufacturer has been rendered more and more dependant and precarious; the labour of those of them that are employed, is, in many cases, so increased, as to be utterly irreconcileable with the preservation of either health or life. Infancy itself is forced into the market of labour, where it becomes the unresisting victim of cruelty and oppression; while, as might be expected from such an unnatural state of things, the remuneration for this excessive and increasing degree of toil, is regularly diminishing; till at length multitudes among us are reduced in their physical condition at least *below the level of the slave and the brute.*"

"The overseer, as in evidence, refuses relief to the parents, if they have children capable of working in factories whom they refuse to send there. They choose, therefore, what they deem the lesser evil, and reluctantly resign their offspring to the captivity and the pollution of the mill. They rouse them in the winter morning, which as a poor father says, before the Lords' Committee, 'they are very sorry' to do; they receive them fatigued and exhausted many a weary hour after the day has closed; they see them droop, and sicken, and in many cases become cripples, and die, before they reach their prime. It is mockery to contend that these parents have a choice; that they can dictate to, or even parley with their employer, as to the number of hours their child shall be laboured, or the treatment it shall be subject to in his mill, and it is an insult to the parent breast to say that they resign it voluntarily. No!

'Their poverty and not their will consents.'

Sir, our ancestors could not have supposed it possible, posterity will not believe it true—it will be placed among the historic doubts of some future antiquary—that a generation of Englishmen could exist, and had existed, that would labour lisping infancy of a few summers old, regardless alike of its smiles or its tears, and unmoved by its unresisting weakness, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 hours a day, and through the weary night also, till in the dewy morn of existence the bud of youth faded and fell ere it was unfolded. '*Oh, cursed lust of gold!!!*' Oh, the guilt England was contracting in the 'kindling eye of Heaven,' when nothing but exultations were heard about the perfection of her machinery, the march of her manufactures, and the rapid increase of her wealth and prosperity."

"The very period of sleep so necessary to the young is too often abridged. Nay, children are sometimes waked even in the night. Human beings there decay before they arrive at maturity."

"Mr. Wood (a large and highly respectable manufacturer at Bradford) says, 'children have been confined in the factory from 6 in the morning to 8 at night—fourteen hours continually, without any time being allowed for meals, rest, or recreation; the meals to be taken while attending the machines, and this the practice of years.' * * * This is the practice at Bradford * * * The children there occasionally work 24 hours every other day, out of which they are allowed 3 hours only for meals, &c. *When trade is particularly* BRISK!!! the elder children work from 6 in the morning till 7 in the evening, two hours allowed for meals, &c., *and every other night, all night;* which is a still more severe case. For this additional night labour they receive 5*d*. There is another lamentable circumstance attending the employment of these poor children, which is, that they are left the whole night alone, the sexes indiscriminately mixed together, consequently, you may imagine that the depravity of our work-people is indeed very great."

"Immoral Corn Laws!" The Leaguers are now in great trouble because the Corn Laws have an "*immoral*" and "Anti-Christian" tendency!!!

"The following were the hours of labour imposed upon the children and young persons employed in a certain establishment last summer. Monday morning, commence work at 6 o'clock, at 9 half an hour for breakfast, begin again at half-past 9, work till 12; dinner, 1 hour; work from 1 till half-past 4, drinking (afternoon meal) half an hour; work from 5 till 8, rest half an hour; work from half-past 8 till 12 (midnight), an hour rest; 1 in the morning till 5 work, half an hour rest; half-past 5 till 9, breakfast; half-past 9 till 12, dinner; work from 1 till half-past 4; again from 5 till 9 o'clock on Tuesday evening, when the labour concluded, and the gang of adult and infant slaves were dismissed for the night, after having toiled 39 hours, with 9 intervals for refreshment (but none for bed), amounting to 6 hours

only in the whole. Wednesday and Thursday, *day* work only. On Friday morning till Saturday night, the same labour repeated, with the same intermissions as endured on Monday night and Tuesday; only the labour of the last day closed at 5, when the poor wretches were dismissed.

"Yes, the females of this country, no matter whether children or grown up, I hardly know which is the most disgusting outrage, are beaten upon their face, arms and bosoms—beaten in your free market of labour, as you term it, like slaves. These are the instruments (exhibiting the knout.) They are quite equal to breaking an arm, only the bones of the young, as I said before, are pliant. The marks, however, of the thong are long visible, and the poor wretch is flogged before its companions—flogged, I say, like a dog before its tyrant overlooker. Sir, we talk of the cart whip of the West Indies, but let us see this night an equal feeling arise against the factory thong of England. * * * Sir, I wish to propose a clause in this Bill, enacting, that the overseer who dares to lay it on the almost naked body of the child, shall tread the wheel for a month; and it would be only right, that the master who knowingly tolerates the infliction of this cruelty on abused infancy—this insult upon parental feeling—should bear him company.

"Are we to treat innocent infancy, then, like the poor soldier, who receives his punishment under the eye of the regimental surgeon, lest he should expire beneath the lash? But, Sir, horrible to relate, these eminent men have stood over fainting infancy, and have long since forbade the infliction, which has nevertheless been continued till scores of thousands have expired under it. Criminals and felons sent to expiate their offences, often of an atrocious character, and almost always perpetrated by the daring and the powerful, in the prime of life.—Sir, the law, even regarding these, provides that justice shall not degenerate into cruelty, and therefore limits the powers of its ministers.

"Even the convicts at the hulks, I am informed, are only worked, in the winter from 8 o'clock in the morning, as long as daylight lasts, and in summer, from 7 in the morning to 6 in the evening, from which time is allowed, in both seasons, about 1½ hour for meals; making, therefore, the duration of their actual labour, in summer 9½ hours, and in winter perhaps 2 hours less. I ask, then, whether it is right, to give a premium to crime, and to persecute innocence, by labouring children longer than the law permits adult criminals and felons to be laboured, whose labour constitutes their punishment.

"You have limited the labour of the black to 9 hours, but when I propose that the labour of the young white slave shall not exceed 10, why, the proposition is deemed monstrous.

"Acts of Parliament have indeed protected the brutes from cruelty, infinitely less than we tolerate this system in constantly inflicting. But selfishness, in this instance, acts as the guardian of the animal creation, and renders such laws almost unnecessary.

"Even at this moment, while I am thus speaking in behalf of these oppressed children, what numbers of them are still at their toil, confined in heated rooms, bathed in perspiration, stunned with the roar of revolving wheels, poisoned with the noxious effluvia of grease and gas, till at last they turn out, weary and exhausted, almost naked, plunge into the open air, and creep, shivering, to beds from which a relay of their young fellow work-fellows have just risen; and such is the fate of many of them, at the best, while in numberless instances, they are diseased, stunted, crippled, depraved, destroyed."—(*March* 16, 1832.)

"The degree of labour which is carried on by these infants, is not to be endured. They are regarded as machines of no value. The employer makes his calculation, as to how many hours his machines are to work, to yield a certain profit; but as to what the human machine will bear, he makes no calculation."—(*June* 7, 1832.)

"In the crown colonies, the labour of slaves under 14 and above 60 years of age, is limited to 6 hours a day, and yet the blacks have the enjoyment of good air and the sea-breeze, while these children are subjected to the infected atmosphere of

the factories. Even the adult slaves are required to work but 9 hours a day; and I therefore conscientiously believe, that it would be much better for the humble classes of society in England, if they were the property of others, for then they would be valued, and their lives and limbs of some consideration."—(*June* 7, 1832.)

The reader must understand, that every attempt which has been made to mitigate the horrors of factory labour, has been uniformly and determinedly resisted by the manufacturing party—those who are now distinguishing themselves so much, as "lovers of peace and righteousness." They had recourse to every kind of shuffle and subterfuge, to cause delay and continue their enormities. They succeeded in procuring the appointment of committee after committee, and commission after commission; and, when these appointments were made, they tried every means to shun inquiry and put off time. The following observations refer to their conduct in this respect.

"I (Mr. Sadler) am glad the Hon. Member for Middlesex (Hume) is in his place, for it is he who is mainly answerable for this delay; it was he who first sent me before a committee. I told him at that time that he was responsible for this, and I tell him now, that not a man has been examined before that committee, who has not in consequence been subject to the *vengeance of the manufacturers*. I tell him too, that the witnesses, even those who have spoken most favourably of the manufacturers, have been discharged by them, and are now in a state of pauperism, because they obeyed the summons of this House."—(*June* 7, 1832.)

How are we to reconcile the foregoing extract with the following, which I take from the 33rd No. of the Anti-Corn-Law Circular?

"On a deputation of the Corn-Law Delegates being presented before some of the Queen's Ministers, a few days ago, one of them, John Brookes, Esq., Borough-reeve of Manchester, happening to touch pathetically (who could have helped it) on the present dreadful sufferings of the people, burst into tears. In a moment the manly faces of almost all the delegates were—shall I say disfigured?—with weeping."

Now, how were the feelings of these manly-faced delegates exhibited, when Parliament was desirous of inquiring into the sort of treatment which they exercised toward those immediately under their care? Why, these very people, whose privations the delegates now pretend to weep over, for the simple offence of speaking the truth when it was demanded of them (they having no option in the matter)—were visited by their employers with the most unrelenting vengefulness. Again,

"MR. SADLER.—I know instances in which witnesses are deterred from giving evidence before the committee of the House; and I know that difficulties are thrown in the way of persons who wish to give information on the subject. I cannot forget, either, that in cases of petitions against this bill, the petitioners have not been free agents."—(*June* 27, 1832.)

"I beg leave, again, to say, that nothing could be more respectful than the manner in which the testimony of these witnesses was given, in regard to their employers."—(*July* 30, 1832.)

"(On presenting petitions from Charles Stewart, Alexander Deans, and others, on their having been discharged from their employment, for having given evidence before Mr. Sadler's committee): Every one knows that similar cases occurred in reference to the persons who gave their evidence before the committee on the late Sir Robert Peel's bill. * * * I think we are bound to indemnify these poor men, who have been allowed to exercise no discretion in the business, and have given true evidence in reference to the existence of one of the most degrading and cruel systems, that has ever been allowed in a Christian land. * * So convinced am I, of the accuracy of the circumstances stated, that I have declined bringing forward many important witnesses, under the apprehension of their being ruined for giving evidence before the committee now sitting."—(*July* 30, 1832.)

As MR. SADLER was a *tory*, it will be necessary to give a few confirmations of his statements from the Radical party; they shall, therefore, be radical enough, and Corn-law repealers as well.

MR. HUNT.—"I can confirm many of the statements of the Hon. Member for Aldboro' (Sadler) *from my own observations*. The Hon. Member has very truly stated, that such a system as exists in civilised England could not be carried on in any part of India. I am convinced, that *not even the American savages—not even the cannibals, would suffer their children to be worked in this way*. Indeed, I will go further—the brute creation have too great a regard for their young to suffer them to meet with such treatment. * * * A blow from that instrument (the over-looker's scourge) is almost as bad as the infliction of the dreadful punishment of the knout, which is used to the criminals of Russia. A father, who would patiently suffer his daughter to be treated in this way, would prostitute her, and live upon the wages of her shame. * * * The whole of my constituents (of Preston) are in favour of this bill. They have instructed me to support it, but even if they had desired me to oppose it, I should have refused, as I would rather have resigned my seat in this house, than have done so."—(*March* 16, 1832.)

"These children are employed for 14 and 16 hours together in a heat of 90°, and are consequently obliged to work in a state of nakedness, and, when it is known, that scarcely any of these persons survive the age of 40 years, I do hope, that Hon. Members will not be so ready to protect the manufacturers from blame." (*Feb.* 7, 1832.)

"Shall we allow such a system as this to continue?—a system, that requires watchers to go round to keep the children awake for fear of their falling into the machinery? Why should we go into committee, to prolong the continuance of such acknowledged cruelties?—cruelties to which none of the inferior animals are exposed? Consult any medical man of the manufacturing districts, and he will tell you, that, where the children are excessively worked, eight out of ten of them are crippled before they reach the age of twenty."—(*Feb.* 20, 1832.)

"I observe, that some of these petitioners state that the children employed in the Factories at Glasgow are well fed, clothed, and lodged. If such be the fact, I am glad of it, for I know it is impossible for any human beings to be in a worse state than they are in Lancashire. The petitioners state, too, that the occupation of

these poor children is not one which is unwholesome. The case is very different in Lancashire, where they are obliged to work in an impure atmosphere, of from 80 to 90 degrees, and are kept in a state of perspiration and exhaustion. In short, I can only say, *they are treated worse than dogs;* for, I verily believe, if any gentleman were to find his servant treating his pigs, or his dogs, as these children are treated, he would punish him most severely."—(*March* 7, 1832.)

MR. T. ATWOOD (on factory system)—"It grinds the poor children, and their equally wretched parents, almost to the last thread of their existence." (*July* 30, 1832.)

LORD MORPETH (on presenting county of York petition, 138, 652, for Sadler's bill): "There have been revealed to us facts, not of single occurrence, but of established practice, of which I cannot speak in any terms short of *horror*."—(*June* 27, 1832.)

SIR CHARLES BURRELL.—"The prostration of strength, which ensues to children from this excessive labour, is sometimes so great, that watchers are obliged to go round to prevent the children falling into a state of stupor, which would endanger their entangling their heads or hands in the machinery."—(*Feb.* 20, 1832.)

MR. BRISCOE.—"The Ministers say they are anxious to preserve the slaves from injustice; but I really believe that the cause of these poor children is worse than any thing we have ever heard of in the colonies."—(*June* 27, 1832.)

MR. C. FERGUSSON.—"There never was a system of employment known, in any civilised country, which was so cruel, and destructive, in its operation and effects, as that which is pursued in factories, with regard to the employment of children. Until this system is put an end to, I feel that the claims of humanity are neglected, and that we shall not do well, in the sight of God or man, to allow its continuance."—(*March* 14, 1833.)

COLONEL WILLIAMS.—"I believe, that no question whatever requires such immediate consideration as that of devising some means to protect these poor children against the avarice of their masters."—(*Feb.* 26, 1833.)

LORD WYNFORD.—"There is not one child employed in these factories, who would not be glad to change conditions with a slave in the West Indies."—(*March* 25, 1833.)

LORD ASHLEY.—"Children are sometimes worked from five in the morning to nine or ten at night, without being allowed a single moment for rest or refreshment, and this for six months together. When the mills are about to be visited by inspectors, or persons of distinction, they are cleaned, and the temperature reduced; the children are desired to appear in their best clothes, and the deformed or sickly removed."—(*April* 3, 1833.)

MR. LEONARD.—"The factory system destroys thousands of children, and ruins the morals of nearly all who are brought within its operation. * * * No trade should be carried on with *such a frightful outlay of human lives*, and such an infliction of suffering."—(*April* 3, 1833.)

Victims of manufacturing prosperity!!!

DR LUSHINGTON.—"If one-fiftieth part of the sufferings which are described, in the evidence, which is not objected to by the manufacturers, be really inflicted, then the consequences of delay will be, that this pressure of human misery will be continued for an indefinite period, and that the lives and happiness of thousands may be sacrificed. I cannot consent to the continuance of such horrid sufferings as have been described in the evidence before the House."—(*April* 3, 1833.)

MR. ROBINSON.—"In most cases the children continue in bed the greater part of Sunday." * * * I am most anxious to maintain the great staple trade of this country, but I must say, that if such a trade cannot be kept up, except upon such a frightful system, I am prepared to abandon a portion of it. But, it is said, do not interfere with trade, do not abridge the hours of labour. If you do, we shall not be able TO COMPETE with the foreigner in this branch of trade. In answer to this I must observe, that, if such be the growing competition with other nations, as regards the cotton trade, that it is necessary that the greatest cruelties

should be inflicted, for the purpose of keeping up our superiority, I much doubt, whether the House is justified in consenting to maintain the superiority at such a terrible price."—(*April* 3, 1833.)

MR. GISBORNE.—"In Dundee, it is stated that, for the slightest offence, the boys employed in the factories are taken out, stripped to the skin, and flogged; that the girls are knocked down and kicked; that the common system is, to shut the boys and girls of the age of 16 in the same '*bothy*' or sleeping room, at night." —(*April* 3, 1833.)

MR. POULTON.—"It (the factory system) is a monstrous and cruel system, which has turned the blessing of human invention to a curse, which is repugnant to all natural affections, to the present and future well being of society, and which tends to bring with it the premature destruction of the most interesting portion of the human race."—(*April* 3, 1833.)

MR. M. ATTWOOD.—"I will not venture to repeat the strong terms in which Dr. Farr expressed himself to me, but this I will state, that he said, that having been acquainted in early life with the horrors of West Indian slavery, there are no cruelties practised on the negroes of Jamaica, which can be compared with those exercised on the infants in our factories.

"I beg the House to consider, with what difficulty evidence is obtained at all, when employers threaten individuals, who come up to give evidence, with the loss of their employment, and have actually carried their threats into execution."—(*April* 3, 1833.)

MR. S. MACKENZIE.—(On presenting petitions of certain mill-owners of Glasgow, Kirkaldy and other places *against* Sadler's bill:)—"Should the bill pass, a corresponding reduction of wages must follow, in proportion to the diminished hours of labour, and, that such reduction of wages must be, as much as 35 per cent. on the present scale. * * * Of the petitions from Glasgow, one is signed by forty four of the principal spinners, who employ from 500 to 1000 workmen each." —(*March* 7, 1832.)

MR. STRICKLAND—(in reference to the foregoing:)—"There does not exist in Scotland any freedom from the evils of England on this subject. Children are worked as long there as in England, and their health as surely suffers. These poor children are entirely unprotected. A great portion of them are apprentices, and I look upon that apprenticeship as a sort of qualified slavery, by which the child is placed beyond the means of redemption, at the controul of the manufacturer."—(*June* 27, 1832.)

"I never can believe that the working of children to such a degree as to impair their health, and, in some instances, to render them cripples for their lives, can be advantageous to these interests, as it certainly is not to the character of a great and powerful nation. Nothing can overturn the case which has been already proved, not only by the words, but also by the appearance of the unfortunate, and in many instances crippled, sufferers.—(*Feb.* 26, 1833.)

"Those who oppose the measure, can form no idea of the state of those children who are unhappily the victims of so pernicious a system. For myself, I must say, that I think a perusal of the evidence does not give the public a full and complete view of the case, as it actually appeared; nor indeed, can anything do so, except the inspection of the crippled, blighted, and emaciated objects, who were produced before the Committee of last year."—(*March* 20, 1833.)

Whenever any proposition has been made in Parliament, to check the destructive career of "manufacturing prosperity," the same outcry has always been raised.—"If you meddle with us at all, *we* cannot *compete*, &c.—If you attempt to check white

slavery, we cannot compete.—If you interfere with the truck system, we cannot compete.—If you in any way prevent us combining to reduce our workmen's wages, or if you *do not* prevent our workmen combining to maintain them, we cannot compete." And in like manner, for nearly thirty years, it has been—"If you do not give us *cheap bread*, we cannot compete." Hear what that Eminent Corn-Law Repealer, Sir G. Strickland, says about white slavery, as indispensable to successful competition.

MR. STRICKLAND:—"A great deal has been said about the influence of this measure upon our manufacturers, and it has been stated, that we shall not be able to compete with foreign nations, if we do not continue to demand this toil from the children, for this unreasonable length of time. I am convinced that the prosperity of the manufacturers of England does not rest on such a basis."—(*July* 18, 1833.)

SIR R. INGLIS:—"It is disheartening and disgusting, to think that, on a calculation of profit and loss, we should consider whether infants ought to be worn to death."—(*July* 5, 1833.)

"We are not legislating for adults, but we are labouring to protect the infant population of our manufacturing districts, not against themselves, but against those who are their oppressors, and would extract their wealth from the limbs and sinews of the unhappy little beings, who are the especial objects of the generous compassion of my Noble Friend."—(*July* 20, 1838.)

MR. O'CONNELL (on Lord Ashley's bill.—After noticing the alternations of Committees and Commissions, Commissions and Committees, all to put off time—said): "Really, now, this is trifling, this is childish, but what are we trifling about? About human existence? What question are we dallying with? The question, whether a child in England shall work for a longer period of time, than we prescribe to a Negro in the West Indies * * * Oh! but there may be a counterbalancing evil. To be sure, if you stop the child's labour, you may prevent a yard of calico being spun out; and, if you interfere to prevent a child from being worked to death, you may stop a spinning-jenny for an hour." (*July* 5, 1833.)

MR. SINCLAIR:—"The people of this country, however anxious they may be for the liberation of the negroes from a state of misery and degradation, will have great cause of complaint and irritation, if, while parliament is kept sitting for that purpose, (a purpose most laudable in itself), their representatives do not manifest an equal anxiety to relieve the helpless children of their countrymen from a system of wretchedness and degradation." (*July* 5, 1833.)

MR. O. DYER:—"Proud, indeed, may that Hon. Gentleman feel, that he has been the originator of a measure, which will go to relieve the younger classes of the poor of this country from a system more inhuman and unchristian, than that of West India Slavery." (*July* 5, 1833.)

MR SHIEL:—"Shall then these miserable children be allowed to perish while your committee is sitting up stairs? No! for the people of England demand that you should at once put an end to the abominable system, which combines the baseness of Mammon with the ferocity of Moloch." (*July* 5, 1833.)

"Manufacturing prosperity"!!!

SIR S. WHALLEY.—"In the English factory everything that is valuable in manhood is destroyed in childhood. . . . It is a matter of notoriety, that the cruelties practised in our factories have made us odious in the eyes of Europe. The attention, not of this country alone, but of the whole of Europe, is turned to the

atrocities that have been proved to have been committed in our manufactories." (*July* 5, 1833.)

MR. COBBETT.—"The question amounts simply to this, Mammon or Mercy? After the eulogium which has been pronounced upon the House by the Honourable Member for Marylebonne, I trust that Mercy will prevail over Mammon. At any rate, if we cannot be humane, we can be sincere, if we will. . . . I will be sincere at any rate, and say, on the part of my constituents, that 300,000 of the most helpless creatures in the world hold up their hands to the noble Lord opposite (Ashley) for mercy, for deliverance from the worst slavery ever endured in the world." (*July* 5, 1833.)

MR. W. DUNCOMBE.—"To what does the evidence amount? It establishes the fact, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that a system of overworking children of very tender years does exist in this country; and that they are overworked and worn out by labour; that they are in the habit of being dragged from their beds to the mills at break of day; that they are often worked till human nature is exhausted and can bear no more; that they are frequently crippled for life; and that they not unfrequently sink into an untimely grave These are the facts of the case —facts which cannot be contradicted." (*July* 18, 1833.)

Sunk into their graves by manufacturing *prosperity!!!*

SIR R. BATESON.—"The whole system is one of tyranny and cruelty. When I see so much interest taken in negro slavery, I cannot help remarking, that I deem our system of infantine labour far more disgraceful, though I have always been the warm opponent of the former." (*July* 20, 1838.)

Talk of "fiends" and "brutes," but did any one ever hear of brutes like the millocratic brutes?

The factory system has often occupied the attention of Parliament; and the cruel conduct of the manufacturers was the subject of a motion in the House of Commons by Lord Ashley, in the Session of 1838, a few months before the manufacturers formed themselves into a "Holy League,"—into, as they term it, "the most philanthropic institution the human mind ever conceived;" on which occasion it was said by

LORD ASHLEY—"No less than eighty surgeons and physicians have deposed to the cruel and alarming oppression to which the factory children are exposed.

"Not less than 60 clergymen, either by documents or in person, have declared the vicious and awful condition of those districts, and the utter hopelessnes of any efforts to impart to people engaged in factory labour anything like moral or religious instruction. In 1835, a petition was presented from 200 Sunday school teachers, declaring that it was quite impossible, even on the Sabbath day, to convey to their minds, being in so wearied and exhausted a state, any religious or moral instruction whatever.

"Since 1817, when the late Sir R. Peel introduced a bill for regulating the labour of children, the time for their labour has increased nearly four hours a day. In 1815, I am prepared to show, that the ground travelled over by children spinning above and below in these mills—in that part occupied by far the greater number of children—was about eight and a quarter miles a day; and in 1832, I can shew that children travelled twenty-five miles a day. This is admitted with respect to the mills of the Hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. John Fielden) himself—a mill which did not work at such high speed as the others. In some the length travelled per day amounted to thirty miles, being a severity of labour exceeding

that imposed upon soldiers in forced marches. The consequences of this cruel labour are apparent in the returns relating to mortality in the manufacturing districts. This is an issue as to matters of fact, and I have spared no pains to establish these facts on grounds which cannot be shaken. My own calculations I have submitted to the most careful investigations; they have been examined by one of the first actuaries in England, or perhaps in Europe, who has gone through them with accuracy and patience. The result, on which he stakes his credit, is, that in those districts where the factory system exclusively prevails, as many persons die under twenty years of age, as under forty in any other part of England!"—(*July* 20, 1838.)

Victims of manufacturing prosperity!

It is here necessary to inform the reader, that after a world of opposition, and an endless variety of shuffles and shirks, on the part of manufacturers, both in and out of parliament, the legislature appointed a set of men to be constantly travelling from factory to factory, armed by the law with certain powers, to restrain the barbarous treatment of those "worse than cannibals," "worse than brutes," as Mr. Hunt styled them. It is said:

> "The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip
> To haud the wretch in order;"

but "the fear o' hell" has apparently lost its efficacy on the "manufacturing wretches," through their having, we suppose, been so long familiar with the prospect of it. The country is, therefore, saddled with the considerable cost of keeping an establishment of inspectors to overlook, and, if possible, to curb the cruelties of a set of men, whostyle themselves the "guardians of the interests of the working classes," "a patriotic band;" who describe the landlords as "fiends, tyrants, brutes, &c.;" and, who subscribe their money to send a man, like James Acland, *to remonstrate with the Duke of Cleveland on the manner in which he deports himself to his tenantry.* But if we were called upon to suggest a means of keeping those manufacturing "wretches in order," we would say, if you find the "hangman's whip" insufficient for that purpose, try his rope. Oh! your Grace of Cleveland! was there no such thing as a horse-pond within a day's march of Raby Castle? But, to our subject.

After the numerous extracts we have already given, it is

scarcely necessary to confirm Lord Ashley's and Mr. Sadler's statements by adding more. We will, therefore, only adduce two, and, when it is considered whose they are, these two will be deemed amply sufficient. They are from men who have been *through the mill* themselves and therefore know what it is; who are both extensive manufacturers, and have therefore no interest in making mis-statements of this kind; who are both Corn-law repealers, therefore we must not doubt their veracity. The first is the gentleman alluded to by Lord Ashley, as admitting that the children employed in his own mills have to travel upwards of twenty-five miles a day. Mark what he says about the inefficiency of the "hangman's whip."

MR. JOHN FIELDEN.—"I know very well, that the large cotton mills, and it is the same with other mills, obtain information before hand when gentlemen are coming down to inspect them, and I know that when these gentlemen see the mills, they are in a very different state from what they would be if they were taken unawares. I know that I have felt very fatigued and weary after a day's work in the cotton mill, and I had many advantages which other children had not, because I had a mother and father (to whom the mill belonged) to take care of me. I believe our mills were as well conducted as any. We employed from 1000 to 2000 people, and I believe they were all kindly treated, but I can bear testimony to the exhaustion of the children manifest before the time of leaving off arrives. * * * It is a notorious fact, that labour is carried on for 13, 14, and 15, hours a day in *defiance* of the law. I think 10 hours would be *profitable enough*, both for the employers and the employed. * * I will only add, that thinking as I do, that the medical evidence on which the noble lord has grounded his bill *is borne out by my own experience*, &c. &c."—(*April* 3, 1833.)

"It is acknowledged on all hands, that the law on every side is grossly violated. * * The mill owners say, 'if you do not keep up the 12 hours system, we cannot stand against foreign competition. * * If the noble Lord (John Russell) wishes to enforce the Factory Act, *he must call in the military to do so at the point of the bayonet, it may then be observed, but not otherwise.*"—(*July* 20, 1838.)

Now, do let us bear in mind, that the member for Oldham, John Fielden,—the great and wealthy manufacturer, John Fielden,—the owner of the extensive mills at Todmorden, and other places, the Corn-law repealer, John Fielden, says, that the manufacturers, "the patriotic band," can be prevented only by the active use of the bayonet from committing the most revolting cruelties on the very individuals from whose bones and sinews they have extracted their princely fortunes. He

does not say, that the manufacturers were driven by the "accursed corn-law" to exercise this brutal cruelty on their "victims". No, he says, manufacturing would have been "*profitable enough*" without this cruelty, and notwithstanding the Corn-laws.

The next is one, who, according to his own statement, has "been connected with the cotton trade all his life."

MR. BROTHERTON.—"The factory system is injurious to the health, and pernicious to the morals of young persons employed in cotton and other manufactures * * * Legislative interference has become necessary for the protection of those poor defenceless children employed in factories. * * * I have been connected with cotton spinning about forty years, and during the last twenty years I have assisted in obtaining every Act which has been passed for the regulation of cotton factories."—(*March* 14, 1835.)

"There is such a system of fraud and deception practised, that the intention of the legislature to prevent overworking of children is in a great measure frustrated. If we are unable to continue our superiority without making some alteration, I do contend, that we have no right to make up the difference out of the sweat, and blood, and bones, of these unfortunate children."—(*July* 20, 1838.)

"There are mills, in different parts of the country, now working fifteen, sixteen, and even eighteen hours a day, and children of tender age are employed all this time, and, when they have urged the inability of their strength to do so, have been told to quit, so that they must either comply with these hours of labour or starve."

Such are the statements of one who has himself been a "factory child," and is now a member of the British Parliament: and, repealer though he be, radical though he be, we cannot withhold our small meed of admiration of the following specimen of homely, natural eloquence:—

"Sir, the House must excuse me, if I feel more than ordinarily interested in this question. I stand as a witness before you. I am not ashamed to say, even in this House, that, before I was twelve years of age, I worked in a factory from twelve to fourteen hours a day. I have endured all the privations of these young persons whose case is now under discussion, and for them I cannot but feel deep sympathy. The wearisome hours of toil, which I experienced for several years, made such an impression on my mind, that for the last twenty years I have invariably supported every measure which has been brought forward to reduce the hours of labour in factories. Although I am now elevated to the highest honour which man can confer upon me, that of sitting in the British House of Commons, I can neither forget my former station, nor feel otherwise, than much disposed 'to stand by my order,' and if I should be enabled to ameliorate the condition of the young persons employed in mills, I shall feel that I have not lived in vain."—(*July* 5, 1833.)

After so many, and, in some instances, such lengthy extracts on the factory system, it would be trespassing too much on the

reader's patience to do more than just notice the atrocious conduct of the "Holy Leaguers", as instanced in the truck system, the combination laws, &c.

And let us still bear in mind, that "*up to* 1836 *trade was in a prosperous condition.*"

MR. R. KING.—"A manufacturer generally keeps a shop of dry goods, the poor workman is paid in full at one counter, but he is obliged to go to the other (by a private understanding, that if he does not, he will not be employed), where he receives a shawl, or a gown-piece, or a coat, or something that is useless to him, and at one third more than he can buy it for with his money at another shop. What he receives he takes to the pawn office immediately, and pledges for half the amount he is obliged to give for it, and most probably he never afterwards redeems it."—(*May* 3, 1830.)

MR. BRIGHT.—"Who would believe, were it not explicitly stated, that when labourers who are in want of subsistence, apply to their masters for wages, they are paid in umbrellas, watches, and toys, which they can neither use themselves, nor convert into the means of subsistence? * * * By them (truck masters) the retail trader is grievously injured, for the labourer having no money is obliged to have recourse to his master's warehouse for every thing; and, if he goes elsewhere to buy what he wants, he is turned out of employment. To keep up this system, the *masters combine in all the manufacturing districts, and reduce the men to slavery;* at least, I cannot call the man free, who cannot change his service, however ill he may be used, and who gets for his labour no other reward than his master pleases." (*May* 3, 1830.)

SIR JOHN WROTTESLEY (presenting petitions against the truck system.)—"They next state, that if a workman seeks for redress, he is *immediately discharged.* They complain that the masters resort to various expedients to *evade the law* (the law against truck); they delay to settle with the men sometimes for six weeks; and when the latter, in want of sustenance, apply to the masters, they supply them with *goods 30 per cent. above the market price.*—('*Cheap bread!!!*') Other masters pay their workmen in money in one counting-house, with which they are obliged to purchase goods, the property of their employers, in another. They state that, as many months elapse before the masters pay the bills which the workmen are compelled to run up with the shop-keeper, the latter force the poor workmen to pay exorbitant prices."—(*Feb.* 18, 1830.)

MR. LITTLETON (on the truck system):—"Tea is given out at a *profit* of from 2*s.* to 3*s.* per lb.; butter from 3*d.* to 4*d.* per lb.; tobacco at a profit of 25 per cent. Most articles sold by them are of an *inferior quality, particularly* MEAT, which they get a profit on of from 2*d.* to 3*d.* per lb." (Reader, is this "*cheap bread for the poor man?*") "Some time since, I myself saw a sample of flour sold to a poor mechanic, which resembled more the colour of chocolate than any thing else. I have seen workmen carrying about tongs and pokers, and such things, which they had received as their week's wages, to sell, in order to buy food. A man, discharged for exposing beef that had been given to him for wages, was charged 5*s.* 10½*d.*—sold it for 2*s.*; the man who bought it, after exhibiting it in the market-place at Hanley, gave it to his pigs.—Silk handkerchiefs given for 6*s.*, worth 2*s.*; Irish linen, at 3*s.* per yard, worth 1*s.*; check, at 1*s.* 4*d.* per yard, worth 7*d.*; cheese, at 7*d.* per lb., worth 4½*d.*, &c. For a month together only 2*d.* in money, and that to buy soap for his work. Workmen pay rents in flour, meat, groceries, &c. Cloth-dressers dress cloth for men, who have taken it in truck, at 50 per cent. more than its value, and who suffer a further loss on the sale." (The following given in evidence):—'I do certify that I have been in the service of a truck-master, and in the agreement which I made with him, he inserted a clause that I should not, under any circumstances, take him before a magistrate; that my average wages

were 15*s*. per week; and that, out of that sum, I had to take 8*s*. worth of truck per week, which truck consisted (in substance) as follows;—*flour at* 3*s*. 4*d*. *per stone, worth* 2*s*. 8*d*.; *bacon at* 9*d*., *worth* 6*d*.; *beef and mutton at* 8*d*., *market price* 6*d*.' Overseers of poor of Stoke-upon-Trent certify, that the rates are increased; and the poor are grievously oppressed by being paid in truck at 100 to 200 per cent. above the market price. Wine taken at 4*s*. per bottle, and other things of inferior quality, and at extravagant prices. A man obliged to take a suit of clothes for 30*s*. which he sold to the tailor for 12*s*., who had supplied it to the master for 15*s*. Another case (says Littleton) I will mention, was one which came before the Court of King's Bench in 1823, and was the case of King *v*. Kaye, in which an inventory was put in of the articles a workman had been obliged to take in payment, and which could scarcely be matched in a pawnbroker's shop. I will read only *a few* of the articles: 29lb. of Dutch butter, at 1*s* 5½*d*. per lb.; sundries, a sum of £1. 8*s*. 2*d*.; 14½ yards of calico, at 1*s*. 4½*d*. per yard; 3 yards of linen, at 2*s*. 6*d*. per yard; half piece of ribbon; 4 yards broad cloth, at 26*s*. per yard; 2 ditto, 25*s*. per yard; 1 dozen calico fronts; 5½ yards cord, 9*s*. 6*d*. per yard; a hat, 10*s*. 6*d*.; an umbrella, £1. 10*s*.; 7 yards print, 2*s*. 3*d*. per yard; 22 yards dimity; ½ yard cambric; 10 silk handkerchiefs; 3 scarfs; a scarf; a parasol; 2 metal foreign watches; a tea chest; 25 yards linen; 2 bushels Dutch onions; 7 yards broad cloth; 2½ ditto; 8 yards cord; a brooch; 15 bags; an old rotten mourning pall, consisting of 10 yards velveteen, valued at 15*s*. &c. &c."—(*May* 17, 1830.)

So much for the truck system. Now for the combination laws.

Mr. Hume: "For many years past the country has been burthened by a system of laws preventing the labouring classes of the community from combining together against their employers. Their employers, though few in number, are powerful in wealth; may combine against them, and may determine not to give more than a certain sum for their labour. The workmen cannot, however, consult together about the rate they ought to fix on that labour, without rendering themselves liable to fine, and imprisonment, and a thousand other inconveniences, which the law has reserved for them. The masters, on the other hand, can combine against the men: they are comparatively few in number—possess every advantage of power, and station, and can, at any time, agree among themselves, what rate of wages they will allow."—(*Feb.* 12, 1824.)

"In some cases the conduct of the masters is worse, than that of the men, and I will give a few instances of it. The first act of combination in Glasgow, was the act of the masters. A few men, in Mr. Dunlop's manufactory, in Glasgow, disagreeing with their masters, I believe, on some point of wages, they declined to continue working for him. What was the consequence? why, the masters immediately combined together: for, they called a meeting at which the subject was discussed, and which came to a resolution, to make a stand against the men. This they effected in the following manner: They published a notice, stating, "that, if the men in Mr. Dunlop's factory, did not return to their work on, or before, Monday morning next, they (the masters) would discharge from their employ all the men, amounting in number to ten thousand, until the men who had quitted Mr. Dunlop returned to him." The workmen who had gone away disclaimed acting in concert with any others, and said, "Do not punish them for what we have done;" but their disclaimer was not attended to, and all the men in Glasgow of the same trade were actually turned out of employment. Now, I would ask, whether the mere declining on the part of the men to work for their masters was to be put in comparison, for enormity, with that act of the masters. But, that was not all. The property of the masters enabled them to get the better of the men, who were obliged at last to come in, unconditionally. When they did so, the masters punished their resistance in a very decided manner; for, they actually deducted the loss they had sustained, by this cessation of labour, from the amount of the men's wages; the men being obliged to pay at the rate of ten per cent. per week, until the masters declared themselves satisfied.

"It was a regulation entered into by the masters of Scotland, that any person who quitted one factory should not be employed in another, and that object was effected by the masters sending round to each other lists of the men, who, from any cause whatever, had quitted their employment, so that no man, who happened to differ with his master, could succeed in obtaining employment elsewhere. Was not this an odious combination?"—(*March* 29, 1835.)

Mr. P. MOORE: (in debate on combination law.) "I believe that nineteen twentieths of the poor rates are occasioned by the pinchings which the rich manufacturers inflict on the wages of their workmen."—(*May* 27, 1823.)

MR. COBBETT (on distress of hand-loom weavers): "After the description which has just been given to us, by the Hon. Member for Paisley (Sir D. K. Sandford), of the miseries of the industrious weavers of Paisley: after the description he has given us, of their deplorable situation, of their wretchedness, of their destitution,—I hope we shall never again hear the Right Hon. President of the Board of trade, (Poulett Thompson) say in this House, that he prays God this country may become the great manufacturing shop of the world. It has been said, that, if this House interpose in any way in matters of this description, it may drive certain branches of manufactures out of the kingdom. Drive them out of the country,—drive them out of the world, and into the infernal regions, rather than, that they should continue to produce such appalling distress. The Hon. Member for Middlesex seems to estimate the happiness of the people as nothing. All that he thinks of is, what the country is to gain, and he speaks of the people just as we talk of stock on a farm. "You are working cattle," says he, "I don't want to make you fat, because you won't pay. I want your labour, and you can give me your labour upon straw as upon hay. To be sure hay would be better for you; but you see, it costs a good deal more; and, if I allow you to live upon such a luxury, I shall not be able to put so much money into my own pocket."

"Now, my views are of a totally different description. I am more anxious, that the people should be happy, than that the nation should grow rich, and therefore, I do not wish England to become the great manufacturing shop of the world, seeing that, her endeavours to become so has already produced such a plentiful harvest of misery and wretchedness. I do not care what becomes of certain branches of manufactures; if their being driven out of the country would remove this mass of misery and distress, I say again, let them be driven out of the country—let them be driven out of the world—let them be driven into the infernal regions."—(*June* 11, 1834.)

The reader, we are sure, is ready to ask,—and could any one be found in a Christian country, and claiming pretensions to the Christian character, who would venture to resist the attempts of parliament to rectify such monstrous and proved abuses? — To be sure they did. The *liberal* party fought the battles of cruelty and oppression inch by inch, and not an atom of these inhuman practices would they give up without the most obstinate and determined resistance. This was the sort of reasoning they made use of.

MR. PHILIPS.—"Nothing can more decidedly injure the manufacturers, than to interfere between the masters and their labourers. Nor indeed can I see any reason, why labour should not be just as fair a commodity for sale and purchase, as anything else sold and bought in this country. Why should we introduce

a different principle in regard to the wages or price of labour, than we adopt in regard to any other matter of sale?"—(*May* 13, 1819.)

Does not the preceding smack pretty strongly of the slave-driver?—But what says his namesake, Mr. M. Philips, the *liberal*, repealing, patriotic M. P. for Manchester,? Probably, at the very moment I am now writing (January 30), he is exhibiting himself at the great demonstration of the League at Manchester, and administering one of his strong doses of cant and mock philanthropy to the deluded gulls who will listen to him. How far do his statements *prove* that philanthropy?

MR. M. PHILIPS.—"There is no class of operatives in the community, who experience such frequent and severe privations, as the handloom weavers, because *no interest is felt by those who employ them* to maintain them during the period at which the demand for their labour temporarily ceases."—(*Dec.* 21, 1837.)

We trust, reader, you are not such an idiot as to believe, that the wonderful efforts which the manufacturers are now making, and the money they are expending in agitation, is caused by the interest they feel in the welfare of those in their employ. Not one word more would we write, if we thought you could be so ignorant of their character, as a body, as to believe that they view the operatives in any other light, than as pieces of living machinery by which wealth may be procured. What says

MR. BARING.—"I will not deny, that the desire and policy of men engaged in trade, (whatever may be said of its inhumanity) is to screw down the price of labour as low as possible."—(*Dec.* 19, 1819.)

"The manufacturer takes up labour when he wants it, and throws it down as soon as his necessity ceases."—(*Feb.* 21, 1834.)

Before we quit this part of the subject, the factory system, it is necessary, that the reader should know a little of it in detail. We shall, therefore, take a few extracts from the evidence given before, and published by, Mr. Sadler's committee. It refers to the establishment of Mr. Marshall of Leeds, and shews the way in which he has accumulated the five millions sterling which he has the reputation of being possessed of. We choose that firm, because we believe, they are all *liberals* and Corn-law

repealers, and because, James Garth Marshall, the managing partner, is not only a prominent member of the League, and a principal subscriber to its funds, but is also Chairman of the "Leeds Parliamentary *Reform* Association," and now and then Chairman of the demonstrations and gatherings of the League, when he will throw, at one time, as much as £150 into the begging box of the Great League Fund. Besides all this, he writes tracts about the "immortal souls" of "labouring poor," &c. One of these now lies before me, addressed to Earl Fitzwilliam, and entitled, "The people still in want of good government," from which I quote the following:—

"Look at the condition of the agricultural labourer, enter his bare cottage, see him striving to maintain himself and family on the pittance of seven shillings a week. Consider what are his sad prospects in life, on the very verge of absolute death by hunger; a single step, if so much, out of the poor-house, no hopes of amendment, of better or happier days; as has been his youth, so will be his comfortless old age. This man, my lord, now prostrate, destitute of independence, energy or hope, has in him a MIND an *immortal soul*, a capacity of enjoyment, as large and liberal as your own, and he is of as much value in the eyes of a Just and Merciful God, as you are. Have you really done your whole duty by this your poor unhappy brother, by writing a few letters on the Corn Laws, excellent as they are—and by assisting to pass the Reform Bill, "a great measure"* * *?

"Look again at the crowded streets of our great manufacturing towns, peruse the various statistic accounts by impartial observers of the terrible destitution, the fearful want, disease, degradation, misery, physical and moral, in every shape that reigns there. Look at the wan and haggard faces of the work-people that come into our courts of justice, that attend our public meetings. See how the very race of Englishmen is dwindling down and degenerating under the effects of the unremitting labour, the insufficient and unwholesome food that *their country's laws allow them to enjoy.* (!!!) For well you know, my lord, that all this misery is of man's ordinance and contriving, not the work of the benificent providence of God, who like a true parent has provided ample food and raiment for all his children, if left free to go and earn them by their own labour.

I have not space to depict one-tenth part of the misery that *the cruel laws of our aristocracy heap upon our people.*" (!!!)

Having satisfied ourselves of Mr. Marshall's anxious regard for the "immortal souls" of his labouring poor, let us see how he disciplines their bodies in his own mills; and it will be well if we don't find that J. G. Marshall had better be sure, that there is no beam in his own eye, before he begins to poke at the suspected motes in other people's.

Samuel Downe.—"I am twenty-nine years of age. I am a native of Shrewsbury. I was about ten years old when I began to work at Mr. Marshall's mill at Shrewsbury. When we were brisk, we used generally to begin at five in the morning, and run till eight at night! The engine never stopped except for forty minutes at din-

ner-time. These long hours were very fatiguing. The children were kept awake by a blow or a box! Very considerable severity was used in that mill. I was strapped most severely, till I could not bear to sit upon a chair without having pillows; and I was forced to lie upon my face in bed at one time, and through that I left. I was strapped on my legs, and *then I was put upon a man's back and strapped; and then I was strapped and buckled with two straps to an iron pillar, and flogged!!* After that the overlooker took a piece of tow, and twisted it in the shape of a cord, and put it in my mouth, and tied it behind my head! He thus gagged me, and then he ordered me to run round a part of the machinery, and he stood at one end, and every time I came round he struck me with a stick, which I believe was an ash-plant, and which he generally carried in his hand, till one of the men in the room came and begged me off!!! At one time I was beaten so that I had not the power to cry at all." ! ! ! !

Jonathan Downe—"I reside in Leeds. I am twenty-five years old. I first went to work at Mr. Marshall's mill when I was seven years old. Very severe methods were adopted in order to compel us to work their long hours. *I have seen boys knocked down with a strap;* they have been called from their work, flogged, and then knocked down on the floor; and when they have been on the floor, they have been beaten till they have risen, and when they have risen they have been flogged to their work again. That was very common. I know many who have been bound to pillars, and then flogged—it is quite common to do so. Females were also chastised! No means were taken to remove the overlooker who inflicted such extreme chastisement. If we had complained to Mr. Marshall, we should have been discharged; and whatever hand was turned away from Mr. Marshall's, Mr. Benyon would not employ; and whatever hand was turned away from Mr. Benyon's Mr. Marshall would not employ; and these were the only two mills in Shrewsbury. I have known a mother of two children in Mr. Marshall's employment at Shrewsbury, knocked down by the overlooker. Horseman, the manager, will go to the overlookers, and if they have not done something severe, he will say, 'I have never heard of your doing anything; you have never quarrelled with any of the hands—do something that I may hear of it, and I will stand your friend!' It is the usual practice to prepare mills previous to their being inspected by strangers. It is a frequent thing at Mr. Marshall's mill, where the least children are employed, (there are plenty working at six years of age!) provided a child should be drowsy, the overlooker walks round the room with a stick in his hand, and he touches that child on the shoulder, and says, 'Come here.' *In the corner of the room there is an iron cistern; it is filled with water; he takes the boy up by the legs and dips him overhead in the cistern, and sends him to his work for the remainder of the day, and that boy is to stand, dripping as he is, at his work!* He has no chance of drying himself! we have a vast number of cripples. Some are crippled from losing their limbs, many from standing too long. It first begins with a pain in the ankle; after that they will ask the overseer to let them sit down, but they must not."

Stephen Binns.—"I began to work in the factories when I was about seven years old." * * * "It is not allowed to have seats at all! (speaking of Marshall's mills) They are not allowed to speak to each other. I never knew an overlooker discharged for cruel conduct. If a child complains of ill-usage she gets discharged, that is all the redress she can have."

Mark Best.—"They beat the boys and girls with a strap to make them look sharp. When they are fatigued and tired, they are obliged to use them worse to make them keep up! *The masters know very well that the children are thus beaten and strapped; they encourage the overlookers to do it.*"*

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* Should the reader be desirous of farther information on the cruelties practised in Mr. Marshall's establishments, we refer him to "*The Millocrat*," by Dr. Holland: or, if he should wish to know something of the horrors of the factory system in general, we refer him to the voluminous evidence given before, and the reports published by, the various Committees of Parliament which have been appointed to inquire into this matter.

What a pleasing sight it surely would have been, to see James Garth Marshall, with bowels of compassion distended beyond all controllable limits, approach a bevy of the little animated flax-spinning machines, just after having been put through the gagging or the dipping process. How delectable it would have been to witness the anxious solicitude he would exhibit for their welfare! How their merry little hearts would bound, when he addressed them in such language as this:—

"Now, my pretty dears, you cannot think how much I am concerned about the welfare of your 'immortal souls;' and for this very good reason, that I think your mortality will soon be changed for immortality of some sort."

"I am also grievously distressed, and unable to 'sleep o' nights' by thinking of 'the misery that the *cruel laws of our aristocracy* heap upon you.' I am afraid, too, that you will feel the tranquillity of your minds seriously disturbed at this moment by your reflections on the necessity of our having 'cheap and good government.' Would not the assurance of our soon obtaining annual parliaments and free trade, help to dry your skins, and be a great solace to you in your present condition?" And then, to see him disfigure his manly face with weeping: how touching!

We dare not attempt a comment on such exquisite and shameless hypocrisy. No subject, we think, is so well calculated to excite irritability of mind, as the extreme cruelty of the Leaguers; therefore, the sooner we get rid of it the better; and, by way of soothing any little acerbity that may have arisen in the mind of either the reader or the writer, we will conclude this part of the subject by transcribing a few simple verses—simple, but truthfully descriptive of the woes apportioned to "the *victims of our manufacturing prosperity*." They are the offspring of an expanded and highly cultivated mind,—a mind which gained for its possessor an enviable distinction as a statesman and a philanthropist—*Michael Thomas Sadler*.

THE FACTORY CHILD.

'Twas on a winter's morning,
The weather wet and wild,
Three hours before the dawning
The father roused his child:
Her daily morsel bringing,
The darksome room he paced,
And cried, "The bell is ringing,
My hapless darling, haste!"

"Father, I'm up, but weary,
I scarce can reach the door,
And long the way and dreary,—
O carry me once more!
To help us, we've no mother,
And you have no employ;
They kill'd my little brother,—
Like him I'll work and die!"

Her wasted form seem'd nothing,—
The load was at his heart;
The sufferer he kept soothing
Till at the mill they part.
The overlooker met her
As to her frame she crept,
And with his thong he beat her,
And cursed her as she wept.

Alas! what hours of horror
Made up her latest day!
In toil, and pain, and sorrow,
They slowly pass'd away:
It seem'd as she grew weaker,
The threads the oftener broke,
The rapid wheels ran quicker,
And heavier fell the stroke.

The sun had long descended,
But night brought no repose;
Her day began and ended,
As cruel tyrants chose.
At length a little neighbour
Her halfpenny she paid,
To take her last hour's labour,
While by her frame she laid.

At last, the engine ceasing,
The captives homeward rush'd;
She thought her strength increasing—
'Twas hope her spirits flush'd:
She left, but oft she tarried;
She fell, and rose no more,
Till, by her comrades carried,
She reach'd her father's door.

All night with tortured feeling
He watch'd his speechless child;
While, close beside her kneeling,
She knew him not, nor smiled.
Again the factory's ringing
Her last perceptions tried:
When from her straw-bed springing
"'Tis time!" she shriek'd, and died.

That night a chariot pass'd her,
While on the ground she lay:
The daughters of her master
An evening visit pay;
Their tender hearts were sighing
As negro wrongs were told,
While the white slave was dying
Who gain'd their father's gold!

In speaking thus far of the conduct of the manufacturers, we have noticed scarcely anything of what has occurred since 1838. Being anxious to avoid extending these observations to an unreasonable length, we have trusted to the reader's having a perfect recollection of the various exposures that have taken place during the last four years; particularly by Mr. Ferrand, and by the inquiries that were instituted in consequence of his charges. We might have made long extracts from this source, in proof of the shocking and debasing inhumanity of the manufacturers generally, but as the reader cannot have forgotten them, we will content ourselves with saying, that the whole of Mr. Ferrand's general charges were strictly true. Of his particular facts, of course, we cannot speak; but, so far as the

general charges go, we would engage to prove, most abundantly, the truth of every one of them. In all the tons of publications put forth by the League, they never did, and never could, attempt to deny the statements made by Mr. Ferrand; and they never will, if they continue to publish to the end of the present century. They may call him "a legislative maggot," and his speeches "ravings," and snap at his heels in various other ways, but they dare not grapple with his facts. Whether he be a maggot, or any other insect, we are sorry to say, that he was almost the only speaker on this subject, during the last session of parliament, whose speeches were worth a perusal; for, it seemed hard to say, which party succeeded during that contest in giving utterance to the greatest quantity of nonsense. Mr. Ferrand's defect was, that he was too sparing, that he dealt too "gently with these butchers."

We have now finished the first part of our inquiry, which was, whether the conduct of the manufacturers has hitherto been such, as to justify us in believing that they are now animated by a "high moral and religious feeling;" or that their object in leaguing, is simply to obtain "bread for the hungry," and secure "the happiness of millions." We will not ask the reader, what his opinion is on this point, for, in the language of our motto, we will not suppose him to "*be fool enough to believe, that were the corn-laws abolished to-morrow, and every grain we consume were grown and ground in foreign parts, that such individuals would cease to grind the faces of the poor.*"

We shall now proceed to the second division of our inquiry, namely, whether the object of these holy leaguers be of that "religious and sanctified character" which they boast of. And we shall not be surprised if it turns out that these immaculate conspirators are "burning" less with an "anxiety to promote

the happiness of the human race," than with an anxiety to advance their own sordid interests.

The motto of the free traders is, "buy cheap and sell dear." They acknowledge, that the principle on which they act on all occasions, whether individually or jointly, is to get as much and give as little for it as they possibly can. They invariably point to the famous passage in the petition of the London merchants, presented in 1820, as containing the clearest exposition of their rule of action: "That the maxim, of buying in the cheapest market, and selling in the dearest, which regulates every merchant in his individual dealings, is strictly applicable as the best rule for the trade of a whole nation."

This seems somewhat strange, coming as it does from men who are professing the most unparalleled liberality, and who are applying the most abusive epithets to the landlords, because they accept such rents as the tenants engage to give. Did any man ever hear of a manufacturer accepting 2*s* 5*d* a-yard for his goods, when he might have obtained 2*s* 6*d*? Never.

The conduct of the two parties does not admit of a comparison. Seldom is there an agricultural meeting, whatever may be its nature, where the sentiment of "live and let live," is not inculcated. At their convivial meetings, it is usually given as a sentiment from the chair. But the rule with the manufacturers is, "live and let nobody else live;" beggar my neighbour if possible; get as much from him, and give as little for it as possible. If this is not "illiberality" and "monopoly," by profession, we do not know the meaning of the terms.

"Buy cheap and sell dear!" Now, labour being the principal thing the manufacturers have to purchase, they of course adopt every scheme and contrivance to buy it as cheap as they can. It is not necessary that trade should be either good or bad to induce them to act on this principle. A sixpence screwed from the workman, when trade is good, is valued as much by the

screwer, as when trade is bad. Some of these manufacturers employ 1000, 1500, or 2000 hands. If the employer could, either by corn-law repeal, or truck shops, or cottage rents, or frame rents, or gas rents, or docking, or any other of their numerous methods of thumbscrewing, reduce the workman's wages but 1*s* per week, this 1*s* would, to the millowner employing 2000 hands, be £5000 a-year. It does not follow, that, because the master is making £50,000 a-year, by fair trading, he should be less anxious to screw £5000 more from his already ill-paid workmen. No; as the old proverb goes, "the greater the gain, the greater the greed;" and the more a man gets, the less scrupulous he is often about the means he employs in getting it.

It is a very ungracious thing, at any time, to express an anxiety to accumulate individual wealth, by taking it forcibly from the labourers "sair-won penny-fee:" it would be as unwise, as it would be indecent, if the manufacturers, now that they are leagued to procure a measure *by pressure from without*, were frankly to declare that the measure they are seeking, is to reduce the wages of the very tools they are making use of to procure it. It is quite certain, that if the League had no other object, in seeking for a repeal of the Corn-law, than that of being thereby enabled to force down the wages of labour, they would never be so foolish as to make such a declaration openly. When they are endeavouring to effect an object by public agitation, we cannot expect to find in their publications even an admission that they are actuated by selfish, or dishonest motives.

The evidence we shall have to adduce in this division of our subject, will consist partly of implications, which the reader can adapt as he may think proper.

Great credit is due to the managers of the League's publications, for the extreme vigilance they have used, in excluding any allusion to what they call the cheap labour "desideratum."

But now and then the cloven foot will peep out, in spite of all their watchfulness. The leading article of the Anti-Corn-Law Circular, No. 3, says: "Let the merchant and manufacturer "look at the *progress of their rivals* in foreign lands, where "*food is one-half the price*, and taxes one-fourth of what they "are here, and then ask themselves how long they can success- "fully *compete* with rivals at *such an advantage*." * * "Let "the workmen of all grades, whose welfare depends upon the "success of their employers, ask themselves what will be their "condition, if their masters are unable, in consequence of *the* "*bread-tax*, to withstand foreign competition." In the 14th No. of the Circular it is said, "The Germans, by their industry "and talent, as well as by their *cheapness of labour*, have com- "pletely usurped the supply of certain articles of manufacture, "on the whole Continent of Europe." In the 36th No. they say, "Can we compete for ever with *un-bread-taxed rivals?* "No! capital will go where it will pay." Again, No. 43. "The victory" (of manufacturing competition) "will finally "remain with those who work the best, and at *the lowest* "*price*." * * "It is clear, that if the foreign trade be "continued, the *money* rate of wages" (speaking then of ribbon weaving) "will ultimately be the same at Coventry as at "Basle." In No. 56, a sad rant is made about the progress that "America, France, Belgium, and various parts of the "Continent," are making, "favoured by the greater *cheapness* "*of labour*," &c.

The nucleus of the League is, the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. Now, a week or two previous to the League being embodied, this Chamber of Commerce had a meeting, or conference, which lasted three or four days, at which it was said, by

MR. W. RAWSON.—"This overwhelming tide of competition will never ebb, but will continue to advance, *so long* as the *cheap food* of the foreigners enable them to work at *half the money price of labour*."

It was said, too, on the same occasion, by one who seems to

possess more candour and honesty than usually falls to one of the class to which he belongs:

"There is a great fallacy in the nation about the *benefit* of *cheap bread*. If, as has been said, three loaves instead of two could be got for 2*s*. in consequence of the repeal of the Corn Laws, another consequence would be, that the *workman's* 2*s*. *would be reduced to* 1*s*. 4*d*.; which would leave matters, in so far as he is concerned, just as they were."

It has also been repeatedly said by another, who has always been a repealer, and who occasionally attends the meetings of the League, and subscribes liberally to their funds, that the consequence of a repeal of the Corn Laws must be, and the object of the repealers is, to reduce wages. Hear him!—

MR. MUNTZ:—"I have stated before, and I repeat it, that the Corn Laws very materially support labour in this country."—(*Feb.* 21, 1842.)

Again:—

"It is in vain to talk of the bare repeal of the Corn Laws relieving the manufacturing poor. Why, the *professed object* of repeal is, to enable the merchant to compete with the foreigner. And how can he do that, unless by a *reduction of wages*?—which reduction will be upon all trade, home and foreign."

LORD STANLEY, in his electioneering speeches, after taking office, told his constituents (of N. Lancashire) very plainly, and at great length, what was the declared object of the repealers. In a speech, reported in the Times of July 8, 1841, he said—

"They tell you that their foreign trade will be greatly increased by *cheap bread*. Why? Because they can produce the article cheaper. Why? Because they will have to pay *lower wages*. What other reason? (Loud cries of 'hear,' and cheers.) The *only mode* in which cheapness can benefit the manufacturing community is, by enabling them to *produce their goods cheaper*; and they will so produce them, because *on their own shewing* they will give a *smaller amount of wages*. (Hear, hear.) Is not this the manufacturer's own argument? *I defy any man to come forward and say that this is not the manufacturer's argument.* (Loud cries of 'hear, hear.') Reduce the *cost* of production, and you increase the production. How else, in the name of plain common sense, but by *lowering wages*?' (Cheers.)"

Did any one attempt to deny Lord Stanley's statements, when he *defied* them to do so? No! he was in the very centre of the manufacturing district, yet they were utterly unable to contradict him when he said, the object of the manufacturing League was cheaper labour.

The recent Debates in Parliament must be so fresh in the reader's memory, that we scarcely need allude to them; suffice it to say, that the leaders of each of the three parties in the

House of Commons, Sir R. Peel, Lord John Russell, and Mr. Villiers, distinctly acknowledged, even in the last Session, that cheap bread was asked for by the manufacturers, as a means of enabling them to *compete*, &c.

Earl Fitzwilliam has written three "Addresses to the Landowners of England on the Corn Laws;" which are published together as a pamphlet. At page 15 (edition of 1839) he makes a tedious effort to prove the advantage arising *to the landowners*, from *cheap bread* and *cheap labour*. He begins thus:—

"Let each individual among you enter seriously upon this enquiry. Examine your respective expenditures in the gross, analyse them in detail, and you will find that the *price of corn affects* their amount *most materially*. The *wages* of your *day labourers*, whether employed upon the farm or in the garden; the *wages* of your *menial servants*," &c.

He then goes on, filling three more pages, in order to shew, how "large a part of the expenditure may be ultimately resolved into the *wages of labour*." In the course of this Address, his Lordship proves to us, that low wages mean high wages, and high wages low wages, by the self same process of logic, as that by which it has aforetime been shewn, that a horse chesnut is a chesnut horse, He says,

"If *wages be high* the price of goods must be high, but, if the price of goods be high, our manufacturers cannot compete with foreigners, &c.—but, if they cannot compete with foreigners, our export trade is diminished,—if our export trade is diminished, the prosperity of our manufacturing population is undermined," &c. &c. And then winds up with this solemn injunction, "Let this sink deep into your minds."

We must, therefore, bear in mind, that high wages injure the manufacturing population; and consequently, that, to "undermine the prosperity" of the manufacturing operative, we must raise his wages.

All his Lordship's "Addresses," and late speeches on this subject, appear to us, as laboured efforts to justify what he knows to be unjustifiable, and to have been given with fear and hesitation; in parliament, however, some years ago, he was occasionally more explicit:—for instance,

Unless the trade in corn is made free as the trade in manufactures, the mercantile and manufacturing interests will labour under the most unjust disadvantages; since they will have to *compete*, not only in the foreign, but in the home markets, with the manufacturers of other countries, where *provisions are cheaper, wages lower*, and taxation less, than in this country."—(*Feb.* 21, 1827.)

On another occasion, the Noble Lord, in a colloquy with an Honourable Friend, was delivered of the following bit of sapiency. I present it here, merely to show what pitiful twaddle great men sometimes employ themselves in compounding.

MR. IRVING.—"Much has been said about the *labour* bestowed on manufactures; and this point is insisted on *strenuously*, as a reason for allowing the free importation of grain, in order to render *labour as cheap as possible*. But I believe on examination, it will be found that the price of labour does not form more than about one-sixth part of the cost of manufacture."

LORD MILTON.—"The Hon. Member who has just sat down, has maintained a principle which no writer on commercial subjects has ever promulgated, namely, that *labour* is not a *most important article in manufactures*. Gracious Heaven!!! Is it reserved for one of the most acute commercial men of the day to assert that *the price of labour* is of little importance."—*Mr. Irving.* "I did not say any thing of the kind; I stated that on the most accurate calculation, the price of labour was, in the cost of manufactures about one-sixth."—LORD MILTON.—"Precisely so; but the inference which I draw from it is, that this one-sixth is a matter of very little importance. Now *I look upon it as a matter of very great importance.*"—(*April* 29, 1828.)

The Anti-Corn Law Circular used to have two mottos immediately under its title. The first was from one of Earl Fitzwilliam's three addresses just noticed. The second was from the evidence of Mr. J. D. HUME, Secretary to the Board of Trade, given before the Committee on Import Duties, 1840. Now, as we have seen what Lord Fitzwilliam's opinion is, of the close alliance between cheap bread and cheap labour, it is only right, that we should know what Mr. Hume thinks, as he is a very high authority on these matters. He is asked by Mr. *Villiers* on that occasion—(mark the examiner, and mark the question!)

1200. "Is not the increased *price of food* in this country one of the principle *ingredients* of the *increased cost* of our manufactures, so as to prevent our *competing* with other countries? I conceive, that in the long run it must be so; it either must be so, or the manufacturers and labourers must suffer great privations; wages would first be lowered as much as possible. * * * Altogether, I conceive, that the reduction in the price of food, and particularly the admission of it from abroad, must tend to prevent other countries from being able to surpass us in manufactures."

Mr. Hume is evidently here speaking under restraint. When talking for the ears of the labourers, it is necessary to mumble

the part about *cheap labour*. But we can perhaps throw a little more light on this gentleman's opinions. A few years ago, when the Corn Law was first in progress through Parliament, Mr. Hume wrote a book, entitled "Thoughts on the Corn Laws;" in which he states, that—"The present rate of 63*s*. is not only *too low* for the agriculturist, but *lower than necessary* for the *interests* of the manufacturer." He goes on to say, that,

"If that part of the people, who are only consumers of corn, and have no direct interest in its production, can come to an opinion that the general good of the country, which is their own permanent interest, would be consulted by permitting the foreigner to undersell the British farmer, at a lower price than 72*s*., they are greatly deceived."

In another part of the same book he says,

"An extensive manufacturer possessed of capital to enable him greatly to extend his works, and of weight to influence the decision of this question, might reason thus with himself, *provided his mind were insensible to patriotism*. He might say—I will exert myself to prevent the passing of this Corn Bill, the consequence of its not passing will be, that BREAD *will become* SO CHEAP, that I shall not only be able to make my goods at *much less expense*, by the saving in the *price of labour*, but the importation of large quantities of corn will have a tendency to raise the exchange against England, which will both promote the exportation of my goods, and facilitate the payment for them abroad, thus *enhancing my profits every way*."

The same Mr. Hume, after this, published another batch of his "thoughts." These last are of a different nature altogether, and to the effect, that the Corn Laws *ought to be repealed*. They first appeared, I believe, in the "Edinburgh Review," under the initials H. B. T. (Home Board Trade.) The following notable sentence will give the reader an idea of the rest:—"There is now an urgent necessity that *our prices*, and consequently *wages*, should conform to the continental 'scale.'" Here we see, that the man who a few years before, said, corn ought not to be below 72*s*. per quarter, now says it ought to "conform to the continental scale." The man who formerly inferred, that a manufacturer must be "destitute of patriotism," who would wish to increase his gains by *reducing wages*, now speaks of the "*urgent necessity*" of so doing.

As it is quite clear that the injury Mr. Hume would inflict on the labouring classes was premeditated and intentional, it is

desirable to know, whether or not, Earl Fitzwilliam, when he joined the Leaguers' conspiracy against them, was fullys ensible of the nature and extent, of the dreadful cruelty and wrong, that was designed to be committed upon them. Let us see. When the Corn Bill was in progress through the House, his Lordship, having then for seven years *enlightened* the world as a legislator; said—

"I can bear witness, from my own personal experience, to the severe distresses of the labourers in husbandry, to whom the *cheapness of corn*, (so much wished for by those who argue on *the other side)* is a disadvantage; because, that very circumstance throws them out of work. Although the adoption of this bill may be partially disadvantageous, I am *convinced* it would be generally beneficial; and, *without it, I think, that the farmer would be ruined, and the labourer starved.*"—*March* 3, 1815.)

When we see public men, like Earl Fitzwilliam, and Mr. Hume, advocating a measure, after they have given us the most direct proofs, of their being fully sensible of the lamentable injury that such measure would *inflict* on the labouring poor, we do not know what to think of their motives.

A gentleman, of the name of HEWITT DAVIS, lately wrote a tract to prove, that "every branch of the community" is "interested in obtaining *cheaper labour;* which is only to be obtained by a *cheaper supply of food.*" He says:

"A *manufacturer* having demonstrated to me, how much he would be *benefited by a slight reduction in the price of labour,* but which could not be made without a proportionate reduction in the *prices paid* by the labourers *for their food,* I was led to reflect, &c."

And, after a necessary degree of reflection, Mr. Davis finds, that

"*A reduction of wages always follow a permanent decline in the price of wheat.* And that a free importation of foreign wheat, would not eventually be injurious even to the farmers of England, as by such an importation the prices of *all labour* and other expenses, would be proportionally *reduced.*"

He then enters into a calculation to shew, to what extent the wages of the labourer might be reduced, and dedicates the whole affair "To the Right Hon. Earl Fitzwilliam." In return for which the Earl writes him a very complimentary letter approving of the work; part of which letter is quoted in the succeeding editions, and we give this extract from it:

"Your calculations, respecting the proportions in which labourers spend their

wages, correspond very much with the result of my inquiries, and as they have been made in very distant and different countries from yours, they confirm each other."

We think the labourer will understand from this fellowship of opinion, that neither My Lord Fitzwilliam nor Mr. Hewitt Davis intend him to have any large share of the benefit to be derived from a repeal of the Corn Law.

Mr. JOHN ROOKE, who wrote a famous pamphlet against the Corn Laws, under the signature of "A Cumberland Landowner," (erroneously ascribed to Sir J. Graham), says, (page 5).

"It is clear that the Corn Laws operate as an extraordinary duty of 20 per cent. on every exportation of the productive industry of England to foreign states; since, it is admitted on all hands, that *provisions* form the *first cost of whatever* is produced by *labour*."

MR. W. T. THORNTON; in a pamphlet strongly advocating a repeal of the Corn Law, acknowledges that,

"One of the *most common* arguments in favour of a change in the existing law, is founded upon the assistance which a *fall of wages* would afford to our manufacturers, in enabling them to compete with their foreign rivals:" that "the intelligent manufacturers of our great towns found most of their hopes of relief from their present distress upon this notion."

This is the candid admission of a repealer.

The motion in the House of Commons, for a repeal of the Corn-laws, which has of late years been in the hands of Mr. Villiers, used to be entrusted to Mr. Whitmore, the member for Bridgenorth, who has always been a great favourite with the free traders. In the Anti-Corn-Law Circular, he is styled an "enlightened, well-informed, and statesman-like man," and his writings are described, as "admirable and valuable documents." In the year 1839, this gentleman addressed two letters to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce; in the first of which it is said:—

"The attention of the legislature should be directed, as much as possible, to remedy *the evil* of a constantly increasing *rate of food*, leading of necessity to a rise in *the price of labour*, and a consequent diminution in the *rate of profit*."

In his second letter, he gives a long, and almost unintelligible argument of the same kind, beginning thus:—

"I need not state, that the *price of food* must, in the long run, seriously affect, if it does not positively regulate the rate of *wages*."

Since the manufacturers have been leagued, the annual motion for repeal has always been introduced by Mr. Villiers: and as his party have, during this time, always grounded their hopes of success on clamour and agitation, this gentleman has generally spoken under some degree of restraint. Although speaking in the House of Commons, Mr. Villiers has evidently felt, that he was addressing *the people*. In such a case it would not do for Mr. Villiers to say bluntly, "my employers, the Manchester manufacturers, want cheap bread, by which they may procure cheaper labour, so that they may be able to compete," &c. No, this would be exposing the trap, which would scare the labourer away, and thus prevent the Leaguers availing themselves of his assistance, in applying the force of "pressure from without." For these reasons, a pitifully laboured effort is required from Mr. Villiers to hide the cloven foot, and to convey a meaning that he dare not plainly express. His observations on this dangerous point are of such a verbose and roundabout nature, that we scarcely know where to choose an extract. In his motion of 1838, about eight columns of Barrow's Reports are taken up, in conveying a meaning to Parliment which he evidently did not want *the people* to understand. The following is from that effort:—

"And what has followed, from the Corn laws, I ask, that was not distinctly predicted by those who opposed them? It was then said, that we should turn our customers into rivals; that, by raising the *price of food* at home, we should give those rivals a great advantage in competition with us. That we should *lower the rate of profit here*, &c. . . . And where is it we have suffered most? Precisely where the *cost of living* has entered most into the cost of production. . . . . Whole branches of the hardware trade have left Sheffield, and are carried on in the province of Rhenish Prussia, where it will be found, that the *best white bread is* 1½*d per lb. and meat* 3*d per lb.* In short, it is impossible for any candid person to examine the evidence which we possess on the subject, and not to conclude, that the competition with foreigners will not be stationary, and that it arises from the exclusion of their surplus products, of which we are in need, and from the *cheapness in their mode of living*." (*March* 15, 1838.)

This motion of Mr. Villiers' was seconded by SIR W. MOLESWORTH, who said,

"One class of the community is set against the other, and the interest of the labourers, and the capitalists who employ labourers, appear opposed; the former suppose, that they would have higher wages, *if the capitalists were less greedy of gain*, and *the capitalists attempt to augment their profits at the expense of the wages of labour*."—(*March* 15, 1838.)

In this debate many others told the old story about the necessity of "*cheap bread*" to enable the manufacturers to compete, &c., but only one had the courage to say plainly what cheap bread means; and, as his is not a very long speech, we will, on account of its blunt candour, give the whole of it.

MR. E. ROCHE.—"I shall vote for the repeal of the Corn Laws, because I feel that it will be impossible for the Irish nation to start upon equal terms with the English as a manufacturing country, until these laws are repealed. A repeal of the Corn laws would open very extensive foreign markets for British manufactures, but these markets are not at present available, in consequence of the *rate of labour being kept up by the restrictive system*: but once let them be abolished, and *labour will* immediately *become cheap in England*, and *still cheaper in Ireland*."—(*March* 15, 1838.)

The Leaguers use every possible exertion to delude the labourers and persuade them, that cheap bread means dear labour, and it is amusing to see the straining they sometimes have to make, and the inconsistencies they occasionally commit. For instance. A few days ago (January 11, 1843), when Mr. Cobden, and the "father of free trade", Colonel Thompson, went to exhibit themselves to the Scotch, Mr. Cobden said, "Where is the argument, that the wages of labour rise and fall with the price of food? where are all their fallacies now? They have disappeared before the light of reason and the force of argument." Now, it happened, that just before Mr. Cobden said this, his friend and fellow traveller, "the father of free trade", then sitting close by his side, made use of the following argument, which the reader will please to reconcile with Mr. Cobden's flourish.

COLONEL THOMPSON.—"Now suppose we follow a bale of your goods in another direction. Say we send them to Brazil, from which you might bring home coffee and sugar in abundance. But, when you offer your articles for sale, you there meet with the competition of the Frenchman, the Belgian, and the German, who produce goods of the same quality and at the same price. Well, suppose you get ten dollars each for the piece, which the Scotsman brings home to Glasgow, and the

Belgian takes to his own country. The Belgian has paid *two* dollars *for the food* of the workmen who have fabricated the article; but the price paid by the Glasgow manufacturer has been raised by artificial restrictions to *three* dollars, which leaves him seven dollars, while the Belgian has got eight (hear, hear). This, you will observe, is one in seven, or 14 per cent., more than comes to Glasgow, in favour of the Belgian. *This, gentlemen, is our Hull view of the case* (a laugh). *We think, that this hits the nail on the head,* and we ask if you are prepared to hit the nail on the head in the same manner in Glasgow."—(*January* 11, 1843, from the *Scotch Reformers' Gazette.*)

The reader will observe how carefully "the father of free trade" says "*food,*" when he means *labour*. The Scotch manufacturer, says he, pays *three dollars* for his workman's *food*, where the Belgian manufacturer pays but *two dollars;* thus giving the Belgian an advantage over the Scotchman of 14 per cent. When money is paid, however, some consideration is usually received for it, and the consideration received is the thing for which the money is paid. The manufacturer pays wages to the workman for some consideration received, and that consideration is, the workman's *labour*, *not* his *food.* The workman may expend the money in food, or any thing else he pleases, without asking the manufacturer. All the manufacturer wants is, the workman's labour,—he gets it, and he pays him for it, and the payment in plain English is, *wages of labour.* Colonel Thompson's motive for using the word food, when he meant labour, was to keep the labourer in the dark with respect to the meaning of "cheap bread." This is the trick that is in constant and almost daily practice, by the spouters and writers of the League, but we choose to notice it in Colonel Thompson, because he is looked upon as the wizard of his party.

We will introduce another extract, bearing on this point, from an almost equally eminent man, in the estimation of the Leaguers.

Dr. Bowring.—"We export fifty millions sterling of manufactures. Does any body imagine that they are not affected in foreign markets by the price of foreign corn? Does any one suppose that they have not to suffer in value, from the fact of their having to meet, as rivals, with goods produced in countries where *the price of corn is lower,* and the *average of wages less,* than in England?

"The corn-laws press with peculiar hardness on the hand-loom weavers, very

large portions of the articles he produces are exported to foreign lands, and have to undergo the severest competition there. For, as foreign manufacturing countries have succeeded best in producing those articles in which *wages form a considerable part* of the cost of production, and machinery a small portion, they are enabled to manufacture such, as cheap, or cheaper, than the English prices. Hence, a constant decline,—hence, again, a lowering of wages in England."—(H.C. *June* 26, 1835.)

What deplorable floundering even clever men make, when engaged in such a despicable cause as this! How difficult it is, to garnish so nauseous a pill as "cheap labour." "Cheap bread," if it be positively so, is palateable enough, but cheap bread as in this case is really "dear bread," when a man is required to give more of his labour for it. More labour for less pay, is what the manufacturers want, if they dared declare it, but few people have had the hardihood to say frankly, "we want the Corn-laws repealed for the purpose of reducing wages, so as to compete, &c." No, they know that there is something obnoxious to the public ear in the plain vulgar cry of 'cheapen bread, and down with wages'; therefore, they stop when they have got half way; they say we want *cheaper bread*—to enable us to compete. Lindley Murray, in his different essays on the construction of language, speaks of certain parts of speech bearing relation to others, which, although not expressed, are understood. A meaning may, therefore, be conveyed, although not clothed in words, and here we have an instance of it. The manufacturers say, we cannot compete with the foreigner, *because of dear bread* EXPRESSED, but *dear labour* UNDERSTOOD. They would have been most egregious blockheads, indeed, if they had said: 'Now, labouring men of England, we want you to pester the Government with petitions for a measure that will effectually cut your own throats.' No, as I said before, they expose only the bait, and carefully conceal the trap. They hold out the lure of *cheap bread*. 'Labourers of England,' say they, 'we want to procure you *cheap bread*:' 'parliament

of England we want *cheap bread*, to enable us to compete, &c.'

The Leaguers, with the resolute determination to ensnare the labourers, now say, that CHEAP *bread* means DEAR *labour*, but we know them too well to be imposed upon by such a glaring deception. After all we have seen of the party,—after all we know of their previous declarations, —if every leaguing millocrat in England were to prostrate himself before us, and swear in the most solemn language, that his object was, *not* to reduce the cost of labour, we could not, neither could any person, of common sense, in our position, say other than this: "We do not believe you,—we *cannot* believe you!"

If we want to know exactly what "cheap bread" means, we must go back to times when 'pressure from without' was not so much looked to;—before it became fashionable to call in popular clamour to guide the deliberations of our Senate.

The succeeding colloquy will perhaps throw some light on the meaning of cheap bread, and the explanation is important, coming, as it does, from one who, to the enviable distinction of *King of the beggars*, adds, that of being a great captain in Cobden's 'army of righteousness.' We shall see what benefits he expects the labouring poor to derive, from the victory with which the efforts of this *valiant* band are presently to be crowned.

MR. D. W. HARVEY.—"But in what way, I beg to ask, can these interests meet the foreign competition against which we have to struggle, except by *low prices*?"

Now, Mr. Harvey speaks of *low prices*, but SIR H. VIVIAN (in the same debate,) having used a similar argument about the advantage of *low prices*, drew the following reply from

MR. D. O'CONNELL, — "The gallant officer talks of the advantage of *low wages* and *low prices*. But, to be advantageous, it must be universal. Let the gallant officer repair to the Levee room of an illustrious Field Marshal, in full pay, and talk to him of the advantage of *low wages*. It is a little too much, to tell the *poor* of *the advantage of low wages*, when they are starving upon them. The gallant officer might find, that a commendation of *low wages* is not always so safe a doctrine, as it is in the House of Commons. When the gallant officer led his columns against the enemy, no man could do his duty more bravely or better. But if the gallant officer were to draw up his regiment in a

hollow square, and talk to the soldiers of the *advantage of low wages*, it is not very likely that he would produce conviction, though he might mutiny."—(Here Sir H. Vivian rose to explain, saying, that he never named *low wages*, but only *low prices*; when O'Connell said) "I admit, that the gallant officer spoke only of '*low prices*,' but the necessary consequence of low prices, *I think*, is, *low wages*."—(*March* 23, 1830.)

The following explanation by the veteran advocate of free trade, —a man who has grown grey by his long service in the ranks of the repealers, will also give us some idea what *cheap bread* means, and why the manufacturers are so anxious to procure it.

MR. HUME:—(*Feb.* 26, 1833.)—"If the manufacturer pays a *higher price* for a given quantity of *labour*, he is at once met by the competition of those who can get it done at a *less price*, and *why at a less*? BECAUSE, THE MEN HE EMPLOYS CAN PURCHASE THE NECESSARIES OF LIFE AT A LOWER RATE. * * * *If the English manufacturer is obliged to pay his men at a rate sufficient to meet the price of corn, say at 55s. the quarter, he is met by the foreign manufacturer, who pays only at a price corresponding to 38s. per quarter.*"

This explanation is similar to Col. Thompson's: and must be, one would think, explicit enough. Surely no labourer in his sane mind could ever, except through sheer ignorance, assist with his petitions, persons like Mr. Hume, to procure a measure, when these gentlemen have so unequivocally declared that the object of such measure is to reduce the cost of labour.

On the 28th April, 1835, MR. WHITMORE moved the repeal of the Corn Law, when he said,

"Another material consideration respecting the *price of corn, considerably higher* than its rate in surrounding nations, arises from *its effect on capital invested in manufactures*, and other pursuits. It must raise the *price of labour*, and this rise in *the* labour must in some shape or other affect the manufacturer. Some imagine, it raises the price of commodities; others, of which I am one, that it *reduces the rate of his profits*."

MR. MAXWELL:—"In the attempt to compete with foreigners, whose manufactures are not subject to equal taxes, (high prices) the master is *induced to reduce wages for the purpose of preserving his profits*."—(*June* 30, 1835.)

MR. MABERLEY.—"How is it possible, that our manufacturers should long be able to contend with the manufacturer supplied by the *cheaper labour* of the continent, while the *higher duties* of imported *corn* are kept up to their present standard?"—(*April* 29, 1835.)

Mr. Cobden, and the Leaguers, may now use every possible exertion, to persuade us, that they have no desire to reduce wages, and they may think that the necessity of decoying the labourer into the cheap-labour trap is so urgent as to justify the use of most palpable misstatements for that purpose, but we should have been more ready to credit the honesty of their intentions, if

they had gone to Parliament some years ago, and said; "we beg to assure your Honourable House, that our friends, Villiers, Whitmore, Hume, O'Connell, Fitzwilliam, and others, very much misrepresent us, when they say, that we want "cheap bread" as a means of procuring cheaper labour, so that we may be able to compete, &c." If they (Cobden, and Co.) had said, "we possitively assert, that we never had any desire to reduce the wages of our workmen, but our anxious wish has always been to keep up their wages, and increase the happiness of those whose labour has procured for us our enormous wealth."—if they had said this, and proved it, before they commenced their work of agitation, we should have had less difficulty in believing them when they say it now. But they never did so, and it is presuming rather too much on our credulity, if they expect us to believe, that it happened they were attacked *all at once* with this fit of loving-kindness for the labouring poor; *and just at the time* when they wanted the assistance of these people in the work of agitation. We will not insult the reader, by inferring, that there is any possibility of his being gulled by such monstrous hypocrisy.

It is almost unnecessary to add to the extracts already given, and we should not do so, but for this reason,—that, if we go back to the times when mob-clamour had not obtained an influence on the senate, we shall perhaps find a little plainer speaking.

Before Earl Fitzwilliam had a seat in the House of Lords, Lord King used to conduct the attacks on the Corn Law in that House; who said,

"What is free trade but a *saving of labour*? And what is restriction but a *waste of it*? The principle of the prosperity of a country is, the perfection of the *economy of labour*. * * * Capital is daily increasing abroad, and machinery in the course of introduction: so that, unless we have *corn as cheap* as our neighbours, we must in the end be beaten in the contest."—(*May* 29, 1830.)

Two years before that, namely in 1828, the Corn Law was considerably altered, when the same nobleman entered a protest

against it on the Journals of the House of Lords, beginning thus:—

"Dissentient—Because the Bill, imposing high and most unreasonable duties on the importation of foreign corn, is most impolitic, if intended as a source of revenue, inasmuch as, taxes (meaning corn duties) laid upon the necessaries of life, *increase the cost of labour*, diminish the profit of capital," &c.

Attempts were sometimes made to enlist the landlord and farmer into this crusade against the labourer, by endeavouring to persuade them that they would be benefited by forcing wages down. The Anti-Corn-Law League now ornament a set of begging cards, which they are spreading through the country, with portraits of two of their champions, EARL RADNOR and J. C. VILLIERS, Esq.

EARL RADNOR (alluding to what some Noble Lords had called the 'irruption of the Irish'):—"It is not disadvantageous to the English landlords and farmers; for, by *cheap labour*, the *profits* of the farmer and the *rents* of the landlord are *increased*."—(*May* 18, 1830.)

MR. HUSKISSON, in 1830, said:—"The manufacturers of England have no means of meeting that competition, but by *diminishing the wages of labour*, and the *cost of production*."

SIR H. PARNELL:—"Every *increase of wages* is followed by a corresponding *fall in the rate of profit*; then one of the effects of protecting agriculture will be, to injure all the MASTER manufacturers of the kingdom, and all persons who obtain their livelihood by *employing* labour."—(*March* 9, 1827.)

MR. WHITMORE:—"By *raising the price of corn* here you *increase the price of labour*; and as *profits* of capital depend on the *prices of labour*, the effect of a high, and artificial price of corn, is to diminish the *profits of capital*."—(*March* 9, 1827.)

SIR F. BURDETT:—"The manufacturers expect to derive a benefit from a reduction of the *rate of wages*, in consequence of a reduction of the *price of corn*. The manufacturers expect that a reduction of the rate of wages will be beneficial to them in this way, that it will enable them to come into the market with the foreign manufacturers, on fairer terms than at present."—(1826.)

SIR MATTHEW WOOD:—"It is impossible for our manufacturers to compete with the commodities of other countries, while *food* is at more than *double the price*."—(*May*, 1826.)

The next speaker we shall introduce is the very highest authority with all repealers and free-traders: his views on political economy it would be almost free-trade treason to impugn; and for these reasons we shall quote him more than once.

MR. RICARDO:—"However unpopular the doctrine may be, I will state my opinion freely, that I believe the Corn Laws to have materially increased the evil, (commercial distress.) These laws have tended to *raise the price of sustenance*, and that has *raised the price of labour*, which of course *diminishes the profit on capital*."—(*Dec.* 24, 1819.)

"The rate of interest depends upon the *profit* that can be made upon the em-

ployment of *capital*; and that again depends upon the *wages of labour*, which are regulated in a great measure by the *price of food*."—(*Feb.* 15, 1822.)

"The *price* of every commodity is constituted by the *wages of labour*, and the produce of stock."—(*May* 19, 1822.)

"The principles of political economy never change, and those who do not understand that science had better say nothing about it."—(*May* 21, 1823.)

"The high *price of subsistence diminishes the profits of capital*, in the following manner:—the price of manufactured articles, of a piece of cloth for instance, is made up of the wages of labour, the charges of management, and the interest of capital. The *wages of the labourer* are principally made up of what is *necessary for subsistence*; if *grain be high* therefore, the *price of labour*, which might be before at 50 per cent. on the manufactured article, might rise to 60, and being sold to the consumer at the same rate, the 10 per cent. (difference) would necessarily be a reduction from the *profits of stock*. * * * A rise in the price of corn by legislative restrictions, tends to injure all *who are not* interested in the cultivation of the land, by *lowering the profits of stock*."—(*May* 30, 1820.)

Here the great Ricardo explains to us, very clearly, what *cheap bread* means. He does not say, that cheap bread means what the Leaguers now tell us, namely, "the big loaf for the poor man." No, he says, that *cheap bread* means *cheap labour*; a fact which the Leaguers now sedulously endeavour to hide from us. To shew that Mr. Ricardo's views coincided with those of the manufacturers, the following compliment was paid him, immediately after making the last-named speech, by one of the wealthiest of them:—

MR. PHILIPS:—"The more my Hon. friend is known, the more he will be respected, and the more universally recognised by all who have sense and *candour* (it certainly requires candour), as one of the most original and wisest writers, and one of the soundest thinkers, on the subject of political economy."

As the next authority in point of eminence, in the estimation of the free traders, was MR. MALTHUS, we may perhaps be allowed to introduce his opinion here, and we do it as quoted by the self-same Mr. Philips:—

"It must be allowed, that a country which possesses any peculiar facilities for successful exertion in manufacturing industry, can never make a full and complete use of its advantages, unless the *price of its labour*, and other commodities, *be reduced* to that level compared with other countries, which results from the most perfect freedom of the Corn Trade. * * * I have contended, that the *price of provisions* ultimately regulates *that of all other commodities*."—(*Feb.* 17, 1815.)

To make up the trio, we will call upon the father of political economy himself:

DR. ADAM SMITH.—"The money *price of corn* regulates that of all other home-made commodities. * * * It regulates the money price of all parts of the rude produce of the land. By regulating the money price of all parts of the rude

produce of the land, it regulates that of the materials of almost all manufactures. By regulating the money *price of labour*, it regulates that of manufacturing art and industry, and, by regulating both, it regulates that of the complete manufacture. The money *price of labour*, and of everything that is the produce either of land, or labour, must necessarily, either rise or fall, in proportion to the money *price of corn*."—(*Wealth of Nations*, Book iv. Chap. 5.)

In looking back, we find we have already quoted upwards of thirty authorities, all tending to prove, that *cheap bread* is sought for as a *means of cheapening labour*. Several of these authorities are the very highest in the ranks of the repealers; and some of them the wealthiest of the manufacturers. It was our intention to add many more; indeed extracts from the speeches of upwards of twenty Members of Parliament not yet named, are already written out and lying before us ready for the press, besides many others that we could refer to; all tending, as strongly almost as evidence conveyed in language can do, to confirm what has already been proved; namely, that *cheaper bread* is sought for by the manufacturers, because of its *bringing with it cheaper labour*. We abstain, however, through a fear of wearying the reader by a too frequent repetition of the same matter from adducing more than one other quotation, which from its decisive character, and the eminence of the man by whom it was propounded, we can scarcely omit.

MR. BARING—"One can hardly conceive the nature of the understanding, that should require an explanation of the proposition, that the *price of labour* is affected by the *price of subsistence*. * * Whatever may have taken place in particular branches, at particular times, nothing is more certain, than that *labour* in the long run must always depend on the *price of the means of subsistence*. * * This I will say, that every *advance* in the *price of corn, and consequently* in the *price of labour*, is giving an advantage to our competitors in the market of Europe. * * There is no man who would venture to deny, that the *price of labour* would be lowered by the *fall of corn*."—(*Feb.* 22, 1815.)

"I will not deny that THE DESIRE AND POLICY OF MEN ENGAGED IN TRADE IS, WHATEVER MAY BE SAID OF ITS INHUMANITY, TO SCREW DOWN THE RATE OF WAGES AS LOW AS POSSIBLE."—(H. C. *Dec.* 9, 1819.)

The foregoing is a portion of the evidence on which we ground our unalterable conviction, that the principal advantage which those leaguing manufacturers expect to derive, from a repeal of the Corn-laws is, a considerable reduction in the cost of labour. If such should not be the case, then must we set

down many of the champions of Corn-law repeal as false or ignorant witnesses. We are anxious to have the best possible opinion of our fellow creatures, and therefore gladly acknowledge our belief that a large proportion of those who clamour for a repeal of the Corn-law, are deluded by the *sound* of cheap bread. Nothing can be so well calculated to beguile an unwary listener, as frothy declamations about "cheapening the bread of the poor,"—"opening the markets of the world," &c. &c. but, truth compels us to declare, that there are on record an immense number of proofs, indisputable, that *cheap bread, and cheap labour*, are synonymous terms with the manufacturers, and sought for by them for this reason.

If the League really have no such object in view, as that of reducing wages, they ought long since to have discarded the services of most of their champions in Parliament. Instead of employing Messrs. Villiers, Hume, and Co., to lead the van when attacking the Corn-laws, they ought to have said to them; "Gentlemen, you have so belied our motives in this affair, that we can no longer allow you to be the pioneers of our 'army of righteousness,' we are actuated by the purest and most praiseworthy motives, and you have repeatedly said our object is to reduce wages. This calumny has so grievously shocked and offended us, that we are under the necessity of dispensing with your assistance in our *holy* warfare." We believe, the impudence, the hypocrisy, and the baseness of the League to be unparalleled, but they dare not call upon their friends in Parliament to eat their previous speeches. The Hon. Member for Montrose might be able to accomplish as much in that way as a man is capable of, but we think he would find something in the task that would beat him. No, as has been well observed in a pamphlet by

Mr. THORNEYCROFT.—"*Cheap bread* is only a *trap* or *bait*, used by those of superior talent, to catch the multitude, for the purpose of carrying their object

by the pressure from without; when, it is *quite certain*, that the end sought by the master manufacturers could not be obtained unless *wages* lowered in proportion to the reduction in the *price of food*. And not exactly in proportion either, for the wages would be *reduced much lower* than the price of food."

The manufacturers have another reason, besides that of beating down wages, for wishing to procure cheap bread, or rather, cheap flour; and this we will shortly notice. It is, we believe, an indisputable fact, that as much flour is used by the manufacturers in the preparation of some of their goods, as all the operatives employed in fabricating these goods consume in the shape of bread. They use it for besmearing their flimsy and rotten calicos, in order to deceive the customer, by adding to the weight and appearance of body in the cloth. Indeed, it is a trick of trade, and a very dishonest one too, as many of their tricks are, but it is adopted by all. It is obvious, then, that the cotton manufacturers have an interest in the *cheapening of flour*, as a material of manufacture, besides the interest they have in the cheapening of food, as a means of *diminishing wages*. Now, it is difficult to say in which case the manufacturers are the most culpable,—their endeavouring to come more cheaply at an article, which they use only as a means of practising the grossest roguery and deception on the wearers of their goods, or in striving to enhance their inordinate gains, by taking their workmen's bread out of their mouths. The manufacturers, however, being deceitful above all men, are too wise in their generation to tell the Parliament, that one reason why they want cheap bread is, that they may obtain calico plaister all the cheaper. No, it would be proclaiming their dishonesty, and tantamount to the grocer's demanding a free trade in sloe-leaves, for the purpose of adulterating tea. The flour thus used by the manufacturers is absolutely and entirely wasted; for every atom of it is dispelled and obliterated, the first time the article passes through the wash-tub. In this way, as much fine flour is carried to the dung-hill, without being of any earthly use except as an instrument of robbery in the hands of the ma-

nufacturer, as the operatives themselves can procure, who have manufactured the article that contains it. As this extravagant use of what is, in its proper application, a most valuable commodity, does no good to the purchaser, but often a great deal of harm, by inducing him to buy a worthless compound of "devil's-dust" and plaister, on the supposition that it is a useful and durable fabric, would this consumer have any objection to the flour so expended being given to the starving operative, who makes the cloth? Certainly not. But would they, the master manufacturers, who are now joined in the *holy* League for the purpose, as they say, of procuring 'bread for the hungry?'—would they, the men who are now pretending to be so nearly on the point of bursting with philanthropy and brotherly love for the poor man—consent that this flour, instead of being wasted in plaister, should be given to the poor plaisterer himself? No! every person who knows any thing of the inordinate selfishness which seems to be inherent in manufacturing competition, will know that a thorough-bred, leagueing Millocrat, would rather waste this flour in robbing the person who has to consume his goods, than give it to the operative who is dying at his feet through the want of it.

The manufacturers put forth high pretensions to philanthropy and every other kind feeling, but if, at the time they were assembled in London as Anti-Corn-Law Delegates, "*disfiguring their manly faces with weeping*," because of the privations and distress of their poor workmen at home,—if these gentry had then sent down to the managers of their establishments in the country, saying, 'make all possible haste to distribute to the men whose labour has procured for us our one or two millions sterling each, all the fine flour in our stores, which we had provided for the purpose of converting into calico plaister, in order to defraud those who are too poor to buy a linen shirt; let all this fine flour be immediately distributed to our work-

men, so that their souls and bodies may be kept together a little while longer, otherwise we shall so disfigure our "manly faces" with weeping, that our wives and children at home will never recognise us again.' If the burning patriots of the League had done any thing of this kind, they would have had a better right to call the landlords 'unfeeling,' 'cruel,' 'brutal,' 'monsters,' than they have at present. The manufacturer may tell us that the paste or plaister is necessary, to size or dress the cloth with; but is it of any more use to the wearer than the dirt on his foul linen? Is not every particle of this dressing passed through the wash-tub to the dung-hill before the article approaches the *wearer's back? Certainly it is.*

While this publication is passing through the press the following appears in the *Morning Herald* of this day (Feb. 16, 1843) under the head of "MANCHESTER MARKETS—Tuesday."

"We regret to learn that another attempt is being made to reduce wages, and that at a time when there is not the least necessity for such a step being taken. We say there is no necessity for a reduction of wages; although there appears to be a slight decline of prices upon both goods and yarns, this reduction is more than compensated for by the fall in the value of the raw material. Three firms have given notice of a reduction in this district, and upon inquiry we find that they are *all* adherents to the principles of the Anti-Corn Law League. One of the three firms are not only manufacturers, but also extensive *sizers*, and their consumption of flour is said to be 360 loads per month. *Cheap flour* is therefore to them of great consequence. The hands of this firm have turned out, and the others have signified their intention to follow their example, and it is feared that this state of things may once more bring about such scenes as occurred in August last. We hope not."

We have now arrived at the conclusion of the second part of our enquiry, and, if the reader is of our opinion, he believes that the contrivers, the supporters, and the principal members of the League have never been distinguished for their liberal, charitable, or humane treatment of the labouring poor; but that their conduct to their own workmen has always been marked by the most revolting cruelty and oppression, and to their customers by the most debasing fraud.* Hence, it is fair to conclude, that

* Mr. Thorneycroft, one of the largest iron manufacturers in the kingdom, in his pamphlet already adverted to, says, "We have suffered more in our foreign demand from a want of common honesty in our dealings with foreigners than from all other causes put together."

the object of the manufacturers in leagueing was not solely that of " vindicating the honour of God and promoting the happiness of man." In the next place, we think their own declarations abundantly prove, that their objects are, rather to increase their own gains at the labourer's expense, than to vindicate either God's honour or the labourer's happiness.

Having seen, that the conspiracy which is usually designated "The Anti-Corn Law League" is, properly speaking, an "*Anti-Labour League*," we shall henceforth consider it as such, and proceed to give a short detail of its course of agitation.

Up to the year 1839, the manufacturers, having been unsuccessful in their endeavours to procure an Act of Parliament the more effectually to oppress and enslave their workmen, became more impatient of restraint, and more pertinacious in their claims.

In the beginning of that year, they assembled as the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and after two or three days conference, agreed to petition Parliament to be heard by counsel at the bar of their House, in support of a Repeal of the Corn Law. The Parliament however rejected their application; which so offended these magnates of the loom, and disappointed their rapacious eagerness, that they immediately resolved to compass their ends by hook or by crook. And on the 27th March, 1839, they solemnly formed themselves into a "*League*"—an Anti-*Labour* League. It was first the Manchester League, afterwards the National, although by far the greater part of the funds are, and always have been, raised in Manchester. To give the reader some idea of the great zeal of this party, it is only necessary to state, that in Manchester, by way of a beginning only, twenty-four individuals, or firms, put down their names for £100. a year each; fifty-two others, £50. each; two, £30.; three, £25.; thirty-eight, £20.; four, £10. 10*s*.; forty-one, £10.; amounting to £6,347; besides a

number of smaller sums. With these ample means they started in pursuit of their object, with all the cunning and untiring perseverance of grim death himself, and bound themselves never to separate, or relax their efforts, until the victim was run down.

Their head-quarters are at 3, 8, 9, 12, 13, and 13A, Newall's Buildings, Market-street, Manchester; where the machinery for agitating is of the most extensive and effective character.

The writer of a series of papers in the *Morning Chronicle*, under the signature of "One who has whistled at the Plough," has given a description of the proceedings of the Anti-Corn Law League, which we copy with but little abridgment:—

"Having a day to spend in Manchester, I determined to get a peep, if possible, at that extraordinary body, the Anti-Corn Law League. At ten o'clock I was in Market-street, a principal thoroughfare in Manchester. A wide open stairway, with shops on each side of its entrance, rises from the level of the pavement, and lands on the first floor of a very extensive house called 'Newall's Buildings.' The house consists of four floors, all of which are occupied by the League, save the basement. On reaching a spacious landing, or lobby, we turn to the left, and entering by a door, see a counter somewhere between forty and fifty feet in length, behind which several men and boys are busily employed, some registering letters in books, some keeping accounts, some folding and addressing newspapers, others going out with messages and parcels. This is the general office, and the number of persons here employed is, at the present time, ten. Beyond this is the Council-room, which, for the present, we shall leave behind and go up stairs to the second floor.

"Here we have a large room, probably forty feet by thirty, with a table in the centre, running lengthwise, with seats around for a number of persons, who meet in the evenings, and who are called the 'Manchester Committee.' The members are all persons who are engaged in their own business during the day, when this room is occupied by those who keep the accounts of cards, issued and returned to and from all parts of the kingdom. A professional accountant is retained for this department, and a committee of members of council give him directions and inspect his books. These books are said to be very ingeniously arranged, so as to show at a glance the value of the card sent out, their value being represented by certain alphabetical letters and numbers, the names and residences of the parties to whom sent, the amounts and deficiencies of those returned, and so on.

"Passing from this room we come to another, from which all the correspondence is issued. From this office letters to the amount of several thousands a-day go forth to all parts of the kingdom. While here, I saw letters addressed to the foreign ambassadors, and all the mayors and provosts of corporate towns of the United Kingdom, inviting them to the great banquet which is to be given in the last week of this month. The amount of postage for letters going out during the week ending 7th January, was £18. 2*s*. 6*d*., but the amount of postage was frequently as much as this in one day; for a single day it had been as high as £38. In this office copies of all the parliamentary registries of the kingdom are kept, so that any elector's name and residence is at once found, and, if necessary, such elector is corresponded with by letter or parcel of tracts, irrespective of the committees in his own district.

"Passing by the rooms in which the committees meet, we come to a large hall, lighted from the top by an expansive dome. This was formerly a picture gallery, and was fitted up by the League for public meetings, but of late the meetings have increased so much in importance that a place called the Corn Exchange, in another street, has been taken, and there the public weekly meetings are now held. In another large room on this floor is the packing department. Here several men are at work making up bales of tracts, each weighing upwards of a hundred weight, and despatching them to all parts of the kingdom for distribution among the electors. From sixty to seventy of these bales are sent off *in a week*, that is *from three to three and a half tons weight* of arguments against the Corn Laws Leaving this and going to the floor above, we find a great number of printers, presses, folders, stitchers, and others connected with printing, at work. But in addition to the printing and issuing of tracts here, the league has several other printers at work in this and other towns of the kingdom. Altogether they have twelve master-printers employed, one of whom, in Manchester, pays upwards of £100. a-week in wages for League work alone. He sent in while I was there an account, which was shown to me as a specimen of the magnitude of the League's operations, an account for paper alone of nearly £1,000! all used within the brief period of a few weeks.

"I shall now return down stairs to the "Council-room." These words were seen in white letters, raised on a door covered with crimson cloth. My friend pushed it open, and bade me follow him. There were about twenty persons present, chiefly seated around a long table covered with cloth, the cloth covered in most part with books, newspapers, writing materials, and elbows of members, who leaned thereon, and listened to what the chairman was reading. The chairman sat at the further end of the room, facing the door by which we entered. The room seemed to be about thirty feet in length. In one corner was a curious, yet simple instrument, representing the sliding scale, which had been presented to the league. The chairman is George Wilson, a gentleman whose face and forehead show a promising fulness of intellect; while his age—three or four years above thirty, his firm and full breadth of body, together with his daily avocations, promise that he will live longer than the corn-laws. On his left sits the secretary, his name is Hicken. I looked with much curiosity upon the councillors to pick from them the names which have become celebrated, or rather the heads, which, according to my ideas, should belong to the well-known names. In a gentleman who sat leaning on his left arm, the arm on the top rail of his chair, listening to the letters the chairman read, calm, reflective, and pale, I at once recognised Richard Cobden; and when he spoke, so mild was his voice, so unassuming his style of giving an opinion, so clearly was the opinion given, that I at once saw the source of much of that importance he has acquired. At the council board of the league he has around him other rich men who make little figure in public, but whose wealth and mercantile operations are known for their vastness throughout the whole civilized world. Several of them who are there every day employ each from 500 to 2,000 work-people. Alderman John Brooks is one of the most remarkable members of the council. He is said to be very wealthy. He is an old man, but full of vigour; he shrinks at no fatigue. To use his own expression, his words 'come rolling out like potatoes from a sack, not in the most regular order, sometimes the one rolling over the other and getting before, when it should be behind, but always coming to the right point at last.' He goes off to distant towns after the earlier and more important business of the day, attends public meetings, travels home again all night, is attending to his leviathan establishment early in the morning, at the league rooms at ten or eleven, at the Exchange till the close of business, and again doing something for the league, all without repose. Another remarkable member of the council is Mr. Bright, "John Bright, of Rochdale," as he is called. He is one of the Society of Friends, not quite thirty years of age, judging by appearance. He is earnest, argumentative, eloquent; clear in statement, apt in illustration, fluent in words, abundant in resources.

"To the other remarkable men of the league I shall devote a future chapter.

Meantime, of the operations of that extraordinary body I may observe, that all the members being men habituated to business, they go to their work of agitation with the same precision in the minutest details as they do in their work of cotton spinning.

"And look at the banquet. Their chairman has said to them, "If ten men come to any of our houses, what provision must we make? It was not difficult to calculate this, and when it was ascertained, the whole was multiplied by 1,000 which produced 10,000, and they prepared for 10,000 accordingly. But as the banquet is to extend over several days, they resolved on entertaining 4,000 a day. For that purpose they have built a prodigious hall, forty-five yards by thirty-five in the interior. Rows of cast-iron pillars support the roof; and that there may be accommodation for the enormous quantity of stores and attendants, *three adjoining streets* are to be roofed in as store-rooms and lobbies. For waiters, 150 men are being drilled for the occasion. In the Potteries 10,000 plates and 3,000 other dishes are being made for the dinner and dessert. Sheffield is preparing for the same 12,000 forks and knives, and 800 salt and mustard spoons. Lancashire is making the glass: 4,000 tumblers, 4,000 wine-glasses, 400 salts, and 400 mustard-pots. On the first day there will be put on the table 200 dishes of tongue, 200 dishes of ham, 200 dishes of veal pies, 200 dishes of sandwiches, 200 dishes of sausages, 4,000 small loaves, 4,000 cabin biscuits, 200 canisters of wine biscuits (3 lbs. each canister), 200 dishes of sponge and seed cakes, 4,000 pies, 2,400 Bath buns, 200 dishes of almonds and raisins, 400 lbs. of grapes, 2,400 oranges, 2,400 apples, 200 dishes of nuts, and wine as it may be ordered by the guests. The tickets of admission to be 7*s*. 6*d*. for gentlemen, and 5*s*. for ladies. On the second day all the provisions will be increased by one-half. I have not learned what the arrangements are for the third and fourth days; but the prices of admission are calculated so as to pay all expenses, and leave an overplus for the league fund."

The Circular says:—

"Every morning the council of the League has, for nearly four years, assembled for the transaction of the affairs of that body, the direction of its agencies, and the organization of ruined and starving millions." (*May* 5, 1842.)

The League hired about twenty-five professional agitators to perambulate the country as *lecturers*; talent, energy, and a willingness to execute any work for which they are paid, seemed to be the only qualifications required in them. And a goodly assortment of these gentry they procured. Some that had been M.P.'s, and still pretended to be gentlemen; some that had been exhibitors of giants and calculating boys; and others that never had, nor ever will have, any other profession than that of living *by their wits*. Of this goodly company, employed by the League "to educate twenty-seven millions of people," some had their knowledge by intuition, as they positively could not read. The lecturers of course had their instructions as a lawyer has his brief. It was their business to exert themselves as much to cajole their hearers, as a barrister would to bamboozle a jury.

The lecturers were also to use all diligence to get up petitions—joint or individual; to establish in every town, village, or hamlet, where they could, anti-labour associations; and to leave in all these places registrars, tract distributors, petition hawkers, &c. &c.

The League also publish and gratuitously distribute an enormous quantity of anti-labour almanacks, circulars, pamphlets, tracts, handbills, pictures, ballads, skeleton petitions, &c. &c., in English, Welsh, and Irish; and this rubbish they dispatch to their lecturers for circulation, not by hundreds but by hundred weights. Of tracts alone they have already spread upwards of five millions. But the principle vehicle of their poison is—the *Circular*. We are not able to give the reader a description of this paper. The arguments therein contained, if arguments they may be called, are of the most varied and contradictory kind. A large portion of their *facts* are the *most impudent lies* that can be put in print. We affirm this deliberately, and will prove it if necessary. Of the spirit of the thing, we can only say, it is just what any person would expect who knows the party who put it forth. As a matter of course, it is therein decreed, that "the corn and provision laws must be entirely, immediately, and for ever broken down." The parliament, "that Augean stable of corruption, must be swept away before the breath of a furious and exasperated people;" "the aristocracy of birth, the aristocracy of wealth, to perish for ever from the face of the country." A variety of suggestions are also put forth, such as, "a general refusal to pay assessed taxes"—"a run upon the bank," &c.—proposals, "that all the manufacturers close their establishments on a certain day, and leave the working population to settle the question with government,"—"for settling the matter in the House of Commons, by stopping the progress of every other question; and many other projects of a character which we (say the League) care not *even to mention*." High encomiums on "agrarian systems." Dark allusions about other

courses "when public opinion is *sufficiently ripened.*" Broad hints about "bullets for Peel," and causing "the Lords" "to flee, if they would save their lives," &c. &c. And all this to "sweeten the breath of British Society."

In *Circular* 51, it is said :—

"The landowners think the property in land more sacred than any other property, and that the right of the owner to it is greater than to other sorts. They should be told, that it is just the reverse, and that it is supported by law and custom only, while it is opposed to natural right.

"The right of every man to the produce of his own labour, is a natural and indisputable right; but land, not being the produce of man's labour, belongs to one person no more than to another."

"An opinion prevails among the aristocracy, that a revolution would only deprive them of political power, leaving their estates untouched; and that the public creditor, and some traders and landowners, whose moveable properties might be plundered or destroyed in the confusion of a revolution, are the only parties who would be injured. The landowners may be assured, that their property is not a bit more secure than that of the fundholders. The same hands that would wipe away the debt would burn the title deeds of their estates. The leaders of a successful revolutionary movement would be very unlikely to commit so great an error, as that of leaving the estates in the hands of the aristocracy. Possessed of them, the aristocracy would form a band hostile to the new order of things, powerful from their wealth and former position in society, and ready to take advantage of any mistake the new government might make, or of any unpopularity or other accident that might happen to overthrow it."

"The possession of a few friends among the landowners ought not to prevent you from making the most determined attack on that body and its vicious legislation."

We cannot in these observations notice at any length the seditious and revolutionary language put forth by this party. It will be sufficient to quote the expressions of Lord Brougham delivered a few nights ago in the House of Lords. When speaking of "the means adopted by them (the League) at some of their meetings to excite discontent and breakings out into violent measures in different parts of the country," his Lordship said :—

"I cannot discharge my duty to your Lordships, and to my own conscience, if I do not express the utter abhorrence and disgust with which I have noted some men —men clothed with sacred functions (hear, hear)—who have actually in this very metropolis of British and a Christian community, and in the middle of the 19th century of the gospel of grace and peace, not scrupled to utter words to which I will not at present, for obvious reasons, more particularly allude (hear, hear,) but which *I* ABHOR, DETEST and SCORN, as being *calculated to produce the taking away of innocent life.*"—(*Feb.* 9, 1843.)

Of that vehicle of filth and abomination, the Circular, the League send a copy to every newspaper, review, and magazine,

in the empire, that will receive it, with a request that its spume may be transferred to the local channels of publication. This or other of their rubbish in the shape of tracts, hand-bills, petitions, &c. has been sent *free* to every library, news-room, mechanics' institute, chamber of commerce, corporation, board of guardians; every dissenting, if not every church minister; and every individual and firm named in Pigott's Dictionary. They have also men employed in scattering this poison in public-houses, club-rooms, beer-shops, barbers, and blacksmith's shops, on steam-boats, railroads, coaches, and even in schools, besides plaistering it on gables, trees, and dead walls. They have contrived Anti-labour crockery, and Anti-labour drapery: —pots, pitchers, pocket-handkerchiefs, and wafers, and printed with all kinds of inflammatory scraps, and extravagant devices:— burly and overfed Poles and Russians, contrasted with famishing dying English;—the landlord's breadshop, great loaves and small ones, or rolls served on bayonets, &c.&c.

They got up Anti-labour bazaars, by one of which they spread an immense quantity of their trash, and realised £10,000. They got up Anti-labour concerts, with lectures between parts. They contrived Anti-labour dinner and tea parties, to which they sent their women,—wives, daughters, and others,—to increase the *melée* and promote agitation:—a very likely method. They endeavoured to *get up* a simultaneous preaching from "Give us this day our daily bread": they gave premiums for Anti-labour ballads, and prizes for Anti-labour essays. They used most extraordinary efforts, and were at great cost to obtain petitions, not only general ones, but from trades, societies, workshops, families, and even individuals, male and female; and to be sent, not once in the session, but every week.

On two or three occasions they sent several hundreds of their party in the character of Delegates to overawe the parliament itself; and deputations to intimidate individual members of Government, and adverse members of Parliament.

On one occasion a large number of them actually forced themselves into the lobby of the House of Commons, with the intention of proceeding to the body of the House, to try how far the deliberations of the Senate would be influenced by personal menace. Individuals of their party were appointed to wait upon editors and proprietors of newspapers, magazines, &c. for the purpose of securing by purchase, bribes, or other means, the co-operation of the public press. They succeeded to some extent in persuading the Americans to create a diversion in their favour, by getting up transatlantic leagues. They proposed to hire the turbulent and disaffected of those who call themselves ministers of religion, to deliver Anti-labour sermons, lectures, and even originate petitions from their pulpits, or collections in their chapels for the league funds; which many of them did. They got up what they called religious demonstrations at Manchester, Glasgow, and Carnarvon, where they assembled the scum of all creeds, and the sweepings of all sects, to vent their hypocritical cant about "taxing the bread of the poor"; and to fulminate their anathemas against the rich. And a very choice example of Christian charity they exhibited.

The league tried to *get up* a general *pray-day;* and the Circular which *followed* the one containing this announcement, proposed a premium for the best ballad or song, to be sung in the streets. They contrived moving advertisements, which they thus described in their *Circular*, 58:—

"The Association have procured wooden models answering to the respective sizes of the American and English eightpenny loaves, the former being one-third larger than the latter, which they have affixed on poles to a van, or 'moving advertiser' drawn daily along the public streets. To these loaves are attached labels. 'English eightpenny loaf; wages 2*s.* a day.' 'American eightpenny loaf; wages 4*s.* a day.' In addition to these, an immense placard is posted on each side of the van, with the following words:—

"What lowers wages?
The bread tax."
"What starves the operative?
The bread tax."

"What ruins masters?
The bread tax.
"Down with the infamous bread tax!!!"
"The novel sight attracts constant groups of onlookers, and it promises to be *a very effective mode of agitation.* It is about to be adopted in London."

The league have recently been contriving a plan of operation on all constituencies, by personal application to every elector in the kingdom. For this purpose they have already had the country mapped into sections, and a large number of lecturers, registrars, canvassers, &c., are already in full operation. They have made several attempts to bring about a system of exclusive dealing. They have repeatedly urged the multitude to besiege the boards of guardians in overwhelming crowds. They have used great exertions to get up in detail a most exaggerated picture of general distress, and have even advertised for tales of woe. In this way they raked up an immense mass of destitution and misery, but with an indiscretion that one could not expect from men of such unequaled cunning. They apportioned certain degrees of distress to particular places, and particular families; and a certain number of inquests, and verdicts of '*died from starvation*' to coroners of particular districts. On enquiries being instituted by the proper authorities, it turned out that a large proportion of these cases were entire fabrications; and some coroners gave certificates, that no inquests had been held at the times and places spoken of, so that of course no such verdicts could have been returned. In like manner, when enquiry was made into the character of certain petitions—that of Tamworth for instance, it turned out, that a great number of these pretended signatures were forged; several names having been put down, of which no such individuals were known in the parish. In numberless instances the names of people were inserted who had never even heard of the petitions, and of others who were of decidedly opposite opinions. And so on, through all the various methods which are practised in getting up agitation petitions.

The reader, we presume, will not need informing, that when an effort is to be made to inundate the House with petitions, individuals are employed to take charge of these petitions, and are paid at so much per hundred for *procuring signatures*. The number of these signatures will therefore depend as much on a man's dexterity in varying his handwriting, and his determination to earn good wages, as it will on his activity and powers of persuasion. With respect to petitioning, the 29th number of the Circular says:—

"We have had some difficulty in some remote places, to make them understand the nature of petitioning; some have sent word, that they cannot make it out, and have returned the petitions, saying they do not know what it means by *sheweth*. We have made them understand that it means *cheap bread*, and they have since gladly signed."

The following extract from Circular 99, will give us some idea of the sort of service the lecturers are hired to perform.

"Besides lecturing when and where it may be most advisable, the lecturer should have in every village, one person who will undertake the circulation of tracts. In the trading and manufacturing districts, the lecturers should *make* their addresses bear mainly on the questions of wages, and employment. It must be *shown*, that the only way in which wages can be kept up is, by increasing the trade of the country. Increased trade, and more employment, are the objects of the Anti-Corn-Law (meaning *anti-labour*) League; these *must* be for the benefit of the labouring classes, no matter what politics individual members of the League may profess. No opportunity should be lost of exposing the *fallacy*, that a repeal of the Corn-law will reduce wages. The working people must be incessantly TOLD that *ours* is the only way of keeping up wages. To advance *our* question, the lecturer must avail himself of *all the means that may lie in his way*. He will have to write letters to newspapers, and should make himself acquainted *with the editors* of all the liberal journals. He should make himself as familiar as his other avocations will allow with the state of the parliamentary registration in his district; he should obtain lists of voters, and take care to have the electors supplied with tracts. What is perhaps of more importance than all is, that he get the active co-operation of a few good men in every place, and let them form themselves into an association, not merely to choose its officers, make one flash, and then go out, but zealously and energetically to continue and carry forward the good work to its completion."

The lecturers are also requested to thrust themselves into private evening parties, so that the guests may be bored with "a profitable interchange of sentiments on the subject of free trade."

The vigorous and effective working of this elaborate machinery of agitation, renders a large expenditure indispensable, and the outlay has already been considerable.

They say, Circular 101,—

"In combination with an extent of personal exertion, such as no merely political

agitation could have called forth, an expenditure has been incurred and defrayed of not less than one ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS."

This unconstitutional and revolutionary band of conspirators unhesitatingly declare, that it was to conciliate them that the late changes in the Corn Laws were made, and at their demand that a large portion of the property vested in agriculture has been sacrificed.

They now triumphantly boast of what they have already accomplished, and confidently assert, that the expenditure of FIFTY THOUSAND more, in the next six months will inevitably sweep away the last remnant of agricultural protection.

COBDEN says :—

"The chairman and council of the League are determined to raise the 50,000*l.*; they'll lay an assessment on the country; and they will have the money, which will bring about the speedy destruction of the bread monopoly. It is already tottering. Down it will come with a tremendous crash, when the artillery supplied by the 50,000*l.* is brought to bear against it."

The millocrats are now putting down their names for 100*l.*, 200*l.*, 300*l.*, each, which shews what a powerful motive self-interest is. Was the liberality of these men ever called forth in a similar manner to relieve from starvation the very men to whom they owe every farthing they possess? Never.

A large portion of the 50,000*l.* is to be expended in bribing the venal part of the public press, and we know that this is already done to a great extent.

We shall not attempt to occupy the reader's attention with any further notice of the proceedings of the League in their career of agitation, but if he be desirous of additional information on this subject, we refer him to the last number of the Quarterly Review, where he will find an article, that throws considerable light on the character of many of the principal men of the League, and shews the dangerous and unconstitutional nature of that conspiracy. We can bear testimony to the accuracy of a great portion of the article in question, from our own knowledge; for, most of the extracts there given are perfectly familiar to us.

Having now given a short sketch of the Anti-Labour League

and its agitation, it remains only to say that the object of this agitation is to influence, by every possible means, the current of public opinion; and no steps are deemed unfair, nor any misstatements too gross, as long as they have a tendency to madden the minds of the people, so that the wisdom of the Senate may be borne down by turbulence and popular clamour. The Cobdens, the Brights, the Crawfords, &c. have repeatedly declared, that they cannot do without the labourers, and they spare no pains to ensnare them. The means used, however vile, are, in the eyes of the Leaguers, sanctified by the end to be attained.

As THORNEYCROFT says, in the pamphlet from which we have already quoted:—

"The question is taken up as a party political subject, and every means tried to delude the working classes. And why is it so, but because their assistance is wanted? Yes, these delusions are sent amongst them, that they may be made to believe what is false, and that they may become the willing instruments of their own destruction."

Lord NUGENT formerly rowed in the same boat with the Leaguers, but he cut the connexion with a rebuke, of which the following forms a part:—

"The majority of the League have committed themselves, and consequently the cause they represent; their agents, by the most untenable statements, by the most extravagant propositions in reasoning, and occasionally by the *most outrageous, and manifestly untrue imputations* of a personal sort, to the great disadvantage and dishonour of the cause;—they have been guilty of several unbecoming demonstrations, especially in their late unwarrantable intrusion into the lobby of the House of Commons; and on several occasions they have committed themselves to *inflammatory appeals*, and *incorrectness of statement*, which have evinced not only indiscretion but wickedness."

At the commencement of our enquiry it was proposed to consider, first, the Leaguers, as to their CHARACTER, MOTIVES, and OPERATIONS; secondly, the CORN LAW AND ITS OBJECT. Having now come to the end of the first part of our task, we leave it to the reader's judgment to decide, whether the conduct of the manufacturers has hitherto been such as to justify a belief, that "*the happiness of millions*," and not their own self-interest, is the paramount consideration with them; AND WHETHER THE LEAGUE IS NOT AS DANGEROUS, AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL IN ITS NATURE, AS IT IS CRUEL AND UNJUSTIFIABLE IN ITS PURPOSE.

Consequences of Repeal.

The first division of the subject having extended far beyond what we originally intended, precludes the possibility of our taking more than a cursory glance at the second. We shall therefore at present strictly adhere to the determination of noticing, and very briefly, one or two only of the leading features of the Corn Law, and the consequences that would result from a repeal of it.

In a former part of these observations it was stated that a member of the House of Lords had defined the object of the Corn Law to be, that of having "the land cultivated and the people fed." And we do not know that any verbosity of language could have given a better definition of what we conceive the intention of that provision to have been.

It is, we think, almost universally admitted, that the Corn Laws have the effect of considerably enhancing the price of agricultural produce, and that a repeal of them would inevitably be followed by a very considerable reduction. Hence they are termed, a *protection* to agriculture. We are not prepared to say what degree of protection they afford us; neither do we believe, that any rule can be laid down by which the extent of that protection can be accurately calculated. Our individual opinion is, and this opinion has not been hastily formed, that the protection which the Corn Law gives amounts to the total difference between the average price of corn in this country and the average price it bears in the nearest foreign ports from which our occasional deficiencies are principally supplied.

The reader will perhaps think we have lost sight of the freight and other costs of importation, but we are quite aware of all that has been, or perhaps can be, said on this part of the subject; yet our opinion is as above stated. But as we have neither time nor space to go through a long train of facts and reasoning

in support of this our own particular view, we will not insist on its correctness. It cannot, however, be denied, that the Corn Laws have the effect, of maintaining the price of corn at a higher rate, than it otherwise would be, but to what extent, it will not be necessary to ascertain. Whatever difference of opinion there may be on this point, it can only be in degree: there can be none in principle.

The Corn Laws raise the price of corn one-half, one-third, one-fourth, or in some other ratio, higher than it would be if its importation were entirely free. But, as it will be necessary for the purpose of our argument, that we should fix upon some particular amount, we will take, for the sake of simplicity, and not because of its according exactly with our own estimate,—one-half.

As the basis of our argument, then, we suppose that the late system of Corn Laws did, during the time they were in operation, preserve the price of that article as high again as it would have been, had there been no restriction on its importation; and a change from the late Corn Laws to an entirely free trade would have ultimately had the effect of reducing the price of wheat from 60*s.* to 30*s.* per quarter, and every other description of farming produce in proportion. We say, *every* other description of farming produce, for wheat is strictly speaking the standard of value. However we may confound or misapply the terms; the precious metals are only the means by which value is measured. Wheat, being the staple commodity of life, has been, and must continue in all ages, the only true standard of value. Whatever laws or regulations we may have, every other description of grain, together with animal food, must in the course of years bear a price in proportion to that of wheat. It will be quite unnecessary to enter into any argument or explanation to prove this, as it must be self-evident to every one who has thought at all on this subject. A word

or two from Adam Smith, however, may not be out of place. In "Wealth of Nations", Book iv. chap. 5, it is said,

"Corn regulates the money price of all other parts of the rude produce of the land, which in every period of improvement must bear a certain proportion to that of corn. Woollen or linen cloths are not the regulating commodities by which the real value of all other commodities must be finally measured and determined; corn is. The money price of labour and of every thing that is the produce of land or of labour must necessarily either rise or fall in proportion to the money price of corn."

Whatever then alters the price of corn, whether higher or lower, does in the same proportion alter the price of every other description of farming produce. It now remains for us to enquire, what would be the consequences arising from a perfectly free trade, presuming that such a system would reduce the price of agricultural produce one-half:—wheat, for instance, from 60*s*. to 30*s*. per quarter.

The political philosophers usually denominated political economists amuse us, among other things, with a variety of fanciful and wire-drawn theories about the elements of which "price" or "cost of production" is composed; but we are not to be carried away by the aerial whimsies of great names. We shall, therefore, neither borrow any of their unmeaning technicalities, nor adopt any of their vapoury theories. Plain language, and common-sense views, will perhaps be, as intelligible to the reader, and as pertinent to this enquiry, as would all the visionary speculations of Dr. Bowring himself.

The PRICE, then, of any valuable commodity is neither more nor less, than the reward of that *labour* which has called the commodity into existence, and brought it into its then marketable state and position.

Labour is of two kinds, *active* and *accumulated*.

Active labour comprises all that variety of manual operations which have been directly employed in fabricating or producing any particular article or commodity; and the reward of that labour is found in the price which the article ultimately fetches in the market where it is disposed of.

Accumulated labour is, what we understand by the word "*Capital*," and it exists in various forms, the extreme ramifications of which it would be impossible to define.

The property of the fundholder, the capital of all mortgagees, private as well as public, and even floating capital, is accumulated labour. The interest which the landlord possesses in the soil is also capital or accumulated labour. A rabid free trader, we are aware, would immediately demur to this; but we shall not repudiate the dictates of common sense for a mass of irreconcileable conceits, or all the nostrums of political philosophers.

Land in every civilized country must be the property of some person or party; and at this advanced age of the world it would be difficult to point out a single acre that has not been a subject of sale and purchase, at one time or other. And whatever may have been the sort or amount of consideration for which it has at any time been bought, that consideration represented a certain amount of labour accumulated by some party.

The modes by which labour may be accumulated are extremely multifarious. But the most common and that which belongs more especially to our inquiry we will endeavour to illustrate by a supposed case.

An operative mechanic at the age of twenty years commences a system of rigid economy and persevering industry, and, finding that two-thirds of his daily earnings are sufficient to purchase that degree of comfort which he has made up his mind to be satisfied with, determines to consume in present enjoyments only two-thirds of his current labour, and to lay by the remainder against that period of life when he may expect his physical energies to decline. One third, then, of his daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly labour, this man carefully hoards up in Savings' Banks and other repositories, by which means, at the age of fifty years, he finds himself in possession of £1000. This thousand pounds may be called capital, but it is in reality

the frugal savings of his early labour, denominated as above *accumulated* labour.

To carry our illustration still further, we will suppose, that at this period of life—fifty years, he finds the amount of his early labour yet unconsumed will support him during the remainder of his days in ease and comfort. He therefore retires from all his laborious occupations, and seeks to invest his accumulations in some way of profit and security. To give it a tangible form, he resolves to exchange it for a certain extent of his country's soil, and to become a landlord. The savings of a life of industry therefore assume the form of fifty acres of land; for the occupation of which he is offered, and immediately accepts, a rent of £50 a-year. Thus he becomes at once a "cruel," "brutal," "haughty," "fleshmongering" landlord. From this time, then, a portion of the price for which the produce of this land is ultimately sold, goes in the shape of rent, to reward the accumulated labour of this mechanic landlord.

In like manner, capital of all kinds, whether in the shape of acres, mortgages, consols, or cash, is accumulated labour, and as clearly entitled to its present reward in the form of rent, dividends, or interest, as any workman can be to his daily hire.

In this way does every atom of PRICE go, either directly or indirectly, in all the variety of proportions, as the reward of labour, active or accumulated.

Of accumulated labour, or what we may call capital, there are two sorts, the fixed and the fluctuating; and, it is the maintaining of these in their proper positions or relation to each other, wherein consists the grand secret of national domestic policy.

When we say *fixed*, we use the term with reference to some acknowledged scale or measure, and so long as capital is kept in that measure, so long does it preserve a fixed character.

We must understand, that in order to facilitate the transfer

of property, or the interchange of commodities, it is necessary that something should be agreed upon to represent value and supersede the inconvenience of barter. The precious metals, therefore, and their substitutes, bank notes, being the most eligible for this purpose, are universally adopted, as a means of fixing the amount or extent of all trading or commercial transactions. Valuable obligations being represented by such specific quantities of the precious metals or money, as the contracting parties may agree upon, it necessarily follows, that all capital, vested by this measure, and available by the same, becomes fixed in its nature. On the other hand, capital vested in anything varying and uncertain in its value must, of course, be fluctuating. For instance, all capital embarked in manufacturing, trading, and even farming speculations, is fluctuating. The machinery of the manufacturer, the merchandise of the trader, and the acres of the landlord, are as fickle and uncertain in their value, as the artizan's daily labour. The labourer's wages, the landlord's rent, and the manufacturer's profit, being all paid from the same source, namely, the *price* of produce, it follows that these parties must be alike benefited, or injured by the same influences.

To simplify our position, and render our statement more intelligible to the reader, we may assume, that all capital of a fixed character may be brought under the denomination of the MONIED INTEREST, and all capital of a varying and uncertain character may be denominated the LANDED INTEREST.

But before we proceed to consider the relative position of these antagonist interests, it will be necessary that we should clearly understand what is comprehended in the term Landed Interest.

The *landed interest*, then, includes every active operation of manual industry, whether it be that of digging the soil, throwing the shuttle, or spreading the sail. An opinion has become

far too prevalent, that the agricultural and manufacturing pursuits have no connexion, or affinity; and that the welfare of one may be promoted by doing a vital injury to the other. No opinion, however, can be more erroneous; yet so universally is it diffused, that there probably are not half a dozen members in either house of parliament who do not participate in it to a greater or less degree.

No two things can be more inseparably connected, than agriculture and manufactures. For, not only are their susceptibilities of elevation and depression congenial, but manufactures are in reality only subsidiary appendages to agriculture, and entirely sustained thereby. Every business, trade, and occupation of man, are but so many divisions of the complicated scheme of human industry, by which the conveniences and comforts of life are raised for the whole community; and, as these are all either directly or indirectly obtained from the soil, every child of industry may be considered as essentially an agriculturist. Paley says:—

"Let it be remembered, then, that agriculture is the source of all human provision; that trade conduces to the production of provision only as it promotes agriculture; that the whole system of commerce, vast and various as it is, hath no other public importance than its subserviency to this end."—(*Moral Philosophy*, p. 476.)

If man were a creature of solitary habits, living separate, and independent of the rest of his species, he could have nothing beyond the productions of nature, except what his own labour would supply him with. His great motive for exertion would be, to maintain his existence by tilling the ground, and his character would be that of a husbandman. The simple fact of his making for himself tools, clothes, or habitation, would not alter his character or the general nature of his occupation, he would still be to all intents and purposes an agriculturist. As it would be with one individual, so it is with the multitude: no society of civilised beings can exist long without involuntarily concerting to assign the divisions of labour. Reason would soon

teach them, that a combination of labour would add materially to their convenience, and render their operations far more productive of the necessaries and comforts which they require. A certain number of them would naturally engage, exclusively, to till the ground; others to make the necessary implements, others the clothing, and so on; each receiving as a recompense for the due execution of his task, by a process of mutual, though indirect exchange, a requisite supply of food from the general stock. The character of this society would not be changed because of their tacit agreement to combine their labour, they would now be collectively, what they would otherwise have been individually, a race of agriculturists.

Now, Yorkshire may be supposed to contain a fair specimen of the industrial population of this country. And the population returns of 1831 for that county, stated the "proportion of those who drew their support from agricultural occupations; in the East Riding at $35\frac{2}{10}$ per cent.; in the North Riding, at $44\frac{1}{10}$ per cent.; in the West Riding, at $18\frac{2}{10}$ per cent. The rest came under the heads of "trade, manufactures, and other classes." From this classification some people might suppose, that 64 per cent. of the population of the East Riding are entirely independent of agriculture, and supported by some resources exclusively their own. There is, however, scarcely a town, village, or hamlet in the Riding of which we have not some knowledge, and we would thank any one to inform us, what tradesman, or trading firm, in that district, does not derive his support, by either direct or circuitous channels, from agriculture. An endless number of smiths and joiners, tailors and drapers, butchers and bakers, there may be, but these subsist only as purveyors to agriculture or distributors of its produce. The maker of the agricultural instrument belongs as strictly to the agricultural interest, as the man who uses it, and the labour of both is rewarded from the same source. As it is with the

maker of the husbandman's tools, so is it with the maker of his clothes, &c. &c. every branch of trade, manufactures, professions, are but so many aids to agriculture, and entirely sustained thereby.

If a farmer should sell the produce of his farm for 1000*l.* he would probably distribute 800*l.* of that among various parties dependent on his exertions. He would perhaps pay 200*l.* as wages, 200*l.* to the taxgatherer, 200*l.* to his landlord, and 200*l.* in miscellaneous expenses. These sums would be again distributed, and redistributed, by their several recipients, and thus give pulsation and vitality to the whole system of human industry; calling into existence every article of necessity, or luxury, which the ingenuity of man can devise.

It would no doubt be difficult, to convince those who manufacture goods for the markets of China or Brazil, that without the labour of the British farmer the demand for their productions would cease, yet such is the fact. The exports are only a natural consequence of the superabundance of native produce, and a demand for foreign luxuries which anexcess of internal wealth occasions. A large class of the community are furnished either by their own industry or that of others, with such an abundance of produce, or of money which represents produce, that they are able to command for enjoyment the luxuries of every latitude. But as tea, coffee, tobacco, spirits, &c. cannot be imported without something being given in exchange for them, the most suitable articles that we could export for this purpose have of late years been manufactured goods, principally cottons, which a series of extraordinary mechanical inventions have so far cheapened, as to render saleable to a considerable extent in different foreign countries. The extensive machinery of Manchester and other places produce a greater quantity of a certain description of goods, than the occasions of the community demand, and the manufacturers of these goods find it

necessary to transform their surplus productions, by the process of commercial exchange, into a variety of foreign luxuries, in order to effect a sale of them to the home consumer. Commerce, therefore, and the manufactures for export are not a source or a cause of wealth to this country, but rather a consequence of its wealth. The soil of every country produces a certain quantity of raw material, which the ingenuity and perseverance of man manufactures into a variety of forms for his own use and enjoyment. And it is not the *exchanging* of these commodities by the producers of them that adds to their value. If each article could have a fresh owner every day, that would not increase the value of the general stock. Our ideas of foreign commerce are confused by our having intercourse with nations under other Governments than our own, from which a part of trade is called foreign. But, if Buonaparte or any other person had acquired universal dominion, and governed all by one code of laws, there would not then have been anything to which the name of foreign commerce could have been given : all would have been domestic. And as it would have been in that case, so it is in reality now. The principle is alike, whether the parties exchanging are under the same, or different Governments, and whether the Pacific Ocean lies between them, or only the river Thames.

Commerce, then, is simply the method by which different countries exchange their produce with each other. If England were surrounded by some impassable barrier, by which all communication with other nations would be cut off, it might be as wealthy as it is now. It is true, we might for a while have an excess of some descriptions of produce, and at the same time feel a lack of certain luxuries, which habitual use has taught us to consider as necessaries, but on the whole the national produce might be as valuable as it is now.

Foreign commerce never was to England, nor ever will be,

a source of national wealth. It undoubtedly has been a means of enabling individuals to get riches, but in a national point of view, its effect is impoverishing; for, nearly everything we give is intrinsically valuable, but the bulk of what we receive is, evanescent luxuries, which tend only to impoverish, debase, and debilitate the consumers of them.

Commerce, when stripped of all its intricacy, and mystification, is simply barter. England gives what she exports in exchange for what she imports; and it only requires a momentary glance at the component parts of these bulks to convince us, that, as a nation, we are not gainers by the transaction. If we could at one view see all the articles comprised in the twelve months exports collected on the beach, ready for shipping, and in another place all the articles or commodities which we had agreed to take in exchange for them; we should find, that almost every thing we were giving was substantially useful in itself; such as clothing of every description, machinery, tools, &c.; and that a large portion of what we were receiving was evanescent in its nature, and pernicious in its tendency; such as wine, brandy, tobacco, spices, &c. All this is purchased with what is really valuable. For the thirty-five, or forty millions of pounds of tobacco, we give as much as would supply a new gown, or coat, to every back in Ireland that now needs one. And which, I ask, would be most conducive to the general good? If, instead of giving an immense quantity of clothing for this luxury, the foreigner would consent to send it to us for nothing, would he be doing us a service? Certainly not. The article is an enervating weed, of no earthly use whatever. If this commodity were brought to us in a state of fume, and forty million bladders full of its smoke imported, instead of as many pounds of the article in a solid state, what should we think of it? Should we not all agree, that it would be better to give the worthless vapour its liberty, immediately on its arrival at London or Liverpool, and let it

dissipate itself at once in the thin air, rather than that five hundred thousand men should be employed half their time in consuming it by retail at a hundred thousand drinking-shops? If we are determined to send a large quantity of clothing to the foreigner, would it not be much more advantageous to the community at large, if we would agree to take for all this clothing a certain quantity of pure æther, instead of tobacco-fumes, and a certain quantity of pump-water instead of an equal quantity of brandy, rum, and wine? It may also reasonably be disputed, whether the tea, coffee, sugar, spices, &c. be worth the cost of conveyance without giving the very coats and shirts from our backs for them.

We import, of coffee about 40,000,000 lbs.; tea, 40,000,000; tobacco, 30,000,000; spices, 10,000,000; sugar, 200,000 tons; spirits, 10,000,000 gallons; wine, 18,000,000. &c.; and on these a duty of £20,000,000. a year is paid. Now, almost everything that we give to the foreigner for this mass of (shall we say unnecessary) articles is really valuable, and essential to the reasonable enjoyment of life; so much so, that if all of them were kept at home, instead of being given to the foreigner, they would be sufficient to give warmth to every one now complaining of starvation. We cannot, then, believe, that the practice of giving the blankets from our beds, and the coats from our backs, for any stuff that has no other tendency than to enervate, debase, demoralize, and impoverish us as a people, can in any way be productive of *National Wealth*. Individuals, as we said before, may get riches by procuring, preparing, or distributing articles of foreign commerce, but in a national point of view its tendency is to impoverish.

National wealth in almost all cases is from an internal source. A nation becomes rich by internal industry, and then it is, that the surplus produce of the people's labour enables them to command foreign luxuries; and thus originates what we call foreign commerce.

The experience and observation of man will soon point out to him the exact form which his surplus labour should assume to command the largest quantity of foreign luxuries. Thus it is that certain mechanical inventions have rendered cotton goods and yarn the most eligible for this purpose.

A Manchester operative may have grown into a Manchester nabob by sending cotton goods to China or South America, but could he have done so if the people at home had been too poor to consume the luxuries with which these goods had been purchased. It is clear, then, that the whole scheme of national industry, call its divisions and subdivisions what you will, agriculture, manufactures, or commerce,—trades, professions, pursuits,—forms one grand machine which may properly be termed the LANDED INTEREST.

We have been under the necessity of making this long digression, in order to show, what is meant by *landed interest*, in contradistinction to the *monied interest;* so that the two antagonist principles might be brought fairly in opposition, and our position divested of every possible mystification. We now resume our argument.

The reader will bear in mind that CAPITAL OF EVERY DESCRIPTION IS LABOUR, and admits only of this distinction, that *capital vested in any branch of the landed interest assumes a fluctuating character*, but *capital preserved in the monied form is fixed;* and it is the undue preponderancy which would be given to one or other of these interests wherein consists the danger of making any great alterations in Corn Laws or Tariffs.

Suppose a farmer enters upon a farm when wheat, the regulator of all prices, is 60*s.* per quarter, and that he requires £2,000. to carry it on with. Towards this he has £1,000. his own property, being the accumulations of his hard labour during the forty previous years. The second £1,000. he borrows. The owner of the borrowed sum belongs to the

monied class, and this sum, under all ordinary changes and circumstances, retains a fixed character, and is still £1,000. according to the common measure of value. But the £1,000. belonging to the farmer becomes, immediately on its being embarked in the cultivation of this farm, varying, and uncertain in its amount, and may be increased, or diminished, by a thousand different influences. Now, if when this farmer has become fairly launched in his undertaking, the Government, in order to please a combination of cotton manufacturers, or for any other reason, should deem it *expedient* to repeal the Corn Laws and the Tariff, or do anything else that would bring down the price of wheat from 60*s.* to 30*s.*, with every other sort of farming produce in the same proportion, the consequence must be, that this farmer, on abandoning his undertaking, would only be able to realise £1,000. instead of £2,000. The whole of his own property would therefore be confiscated by a single act of Government, and the savings of his forty years of hard toil be at once obliterated and destroyed. We ought not perhaps to have said obliterated; but, whether obliterated or transferred, so far as the farmer is concerned the effect is all the same; neither does it make any difference to him whether his obligation of £1,000. to the lender thereof be discharged by selling his effects, or transferring them at once to the creditor. In either case the whole must be absorbed by the *monied interest*.

Previous to the recent alterations in the Corn Law and Tariff, it was estimated by statistical writers, that upwards of £600,000,000. was engaged in the occupation or cultivation of the soil; and of this, (the farmer's capital,) probably one-third, or £200,000,000. was, and still is, held by him on loan, and exists as an engagement of a fixed and definite nature. The recent alterations, we have no hesitation in saying, have reduced the capital of the occupying farmer one fourth, or from £600,000,000. to £450,000,000.; and instead of having £400,000,000. over and

above his pecuniary engagements, he has now only £250,000,000. The creditor, instead of being entitled to one-third of the farmer's effects, now claims nearly one-half, and this has been given to him;—yes, positively given to him by Act of Parliament,—an Act of Parliament contrived and passed for the very purpose! It was said: "*I certainly feel bound to say, that I "think the agricultural interests of the country can afford to part "with a portion of the protection they now receive, and that it is "only just that that protection should be diminished.*" The very expression is appalling: wilful robbery! or wilful murder! which? The argument was the same that is sometimes used on the highway;—"You have it about you, and that is the very reason why you should part with it." A trick like this could not be played in many cases, and why could it in this? Because, as Lord Brougham once said in the House of Commons, "The farmers, quiet creatures, come at the call of the Treasury to be shorn." And we think the landlords are now shewing the same degree of submissiveness. But we have not yet seen the extent of this mischief.

Not only are those of the landed interest injured, by a large portion of the farmers' investments being directly taken from them and given to the monied interest, but the tenant-farmer is injured by his rent being virtually advanced. If a farmer have engaged to give a landlord £300. a-year for the use of a farm, his rent would be paid with 100 quarters of wheat when it is selling at 60*s.* per quarter; but if the ruling powers should say, "It is only just" that this wheat should be sold at 30*s.* per quarter, and decree accordingly, this farmer will then have to dispose of 200 quarters instead of 100, to raise the sum required by his landlord.

It may be said, the landlords will reduce their rents, but a large portion of the land is let on leases for different periods of time in all such cases the landlords would, under any circum-

stances, be entitled to the sum agreed upon. Would a Manchester Millocrat, who has got his wealth by every species of thumb-screwing—would he relinquish half his rents to a tenantry holding their farms on leases? If he would, we could almost believe the leopard should change his spots on being asked.

These Millocrats, however, are constantly telling us, that the landlords must reduce their rents one half. The landlords, however, must be extremely complaisant indeed, if they would consent to sacrifice half their property to gratify the unprincipled rapacity of a knot of conspirators at Manchester.

But to suppose for a moment that the landlords are really the submissive creatures they are required to be, and that they are willing to bow to the fiat of the Manchester slave-drivers—"You must lower your rents one half," would this reduction of rent enable the farmer to go on and be reasonably remunerated?

It is laid down as a rule by various statistical and political writers, that a farmer ought to make five rents, to be fairly reimbursed for his outlay, and remunerated for his care and toil. But we will suppose that four rents would be sufficient for him. A farmer, then, who pays £100. in rent, should make, when wheat is 60*s*. per quarter, £400. a-year of his produce, which may be thus divided:—£100. for rent, £100. for Government taxes, £100. for wages and other expenses, and the remaining £100. for the farmer's subsistence and interest of capital. Now, if the price of corn should afterwards be reduced from 60*s*. to 30*s*., his produce will then only sell for £200. Still the tax-gatherer's claims will be undiminished, and the £100. which he demands will then constitute the half, instead of the fourth, as before. And whether the farmer gives the fundholder half his produce in kind, or half what it will fetch in money, the effect is the same. Allowing, then, that the remaining half will support the farmer, pay wages, and other expenses, there will

remain not one farthing for the landlord. We see, therefore, that no *reduction,* nor even the entire cancelling, of all rents, would *compensate* the farmer for such a depreciation in the price of his produce. Colonel Thompson, however, who pretends to see further into this millstone than any one else, says, that *when* the Corn Laws shall be done away with, (a consummation which he looks upon as inevitable) he shall advance the rents of his estates—*because*, as he says, his tenants will then be better able to pay them. We have forgotten at this moment by what process of logical contortion it is that he arrives at this conclusion, but a strong impression is on our mind, that the gallant Colonel's reasoning on this point is as profound and as rational as his political dissertations usually are.

Admitting, however, that one half of the farmers would be completely indemnified by certain reductions of rent, it is quite certain that the other half could not. All landlords are not so circumstanced as to be able to make any material reduction in their rents. Hundreds, aye thousands of the landlords, have inherited their properties subject to the payment of certain debts, legacies, and bequests of the previous possessors; the contingencies of marriage settlements, annuities to widows, maintenance of collateral branches of the family, costs of improving or reclaiming wastes; besides a variety of other imposts and burthens, which in numberless instances do, one way or other, absorb fully one half of the rental.

If an estate be encumbered to half its value, when wheat is at 60*s.*, it would, if wheat should be reduced to 30*s.*, and rent in the same proportion, be encumbered to the whole of its value, and the mortgagee would then get it.

If then the mandate of Cobden and Co. is to be submitted to, —wheat reduced from 60*s.* to 30*s.*, and rents in the same proportion,—the consequence must be, that the inheritor and nominal possessor of an estate, originally perhaps worth £10,000.

a-year, might find himself left, by this "Act of Confiscation," destitute and pennyless.

A red-hot repealer would very probably say, that a bad law ought not be kept in existence for the protection of embarrassed landlords; and perhaps add, "the landlords ought to keep themselves unembarrassed." This, however, cannot generally be the case. Property cannot descend from generation to generation without being encumbered, from time to time, in some such manner as mentioned before. Money-borrowers there always must, and always will be, otherwise there can be no money-lenders. If there could be no money-lenders, there would be little stimulus to frugality and economy. If there were nothing to induce men to save their earnings, they would spend them as they arose.

The rental of the United Kingdom is variously estimated. We may take it at £70,000,000 a year. Some statistical writers have stated it much higher. The real value of this, calculated at 30 years purchase, will be £2,100,000,000; or in words, two billions one hundred millions sterling. We ought certainly to pause, and not at once consent to reduce property of this extent to half its value, merely because a few turbulent and insatiable manufacturers of Manchester clamour for it. Surely property to this amount ought not to be annihilated, without rendering the owners thereof something like a compensation for their loss. When the Act for the abolition of slavery in the West Indies was passed, it was deemed but justice to compensate the proprietors there, for the deterioration in the value of their properties, which that Act would occasion, and £20,000,000 was accordingly voted by Parliament for that purpose. The principle of compensation, too, has been recognised in the municipal and other Acts. But, if the owners of the soil are to be compensated for the loss of £1,000,000,000, (and in every sense of justice and equity they would be clearly entitled to it)

where, we should like to know, is the money to come from? Can we expect it from the Exchequer in its present state? Could an income or property tax be laid, by which it could be collected within the next century? Or if it could, would it not be taxing the landed interest to pay themselves, and in the most obnoxious manner too? Perhaps the cotton lords, who expect to reap all the benefit from this destruction, will supply the compensation fund. But, before we inquire about their willingness, we ought to satisfy ourselves of their ability. Can they do it? No, they could not advance half-a-crown in the pound towards it. Mr. Baines, an active stickler for the repeal of the Corn-laws, who has been bred and educated in the cotton district, and inhaled its murky atmosphere all his life, and who is not, therefore, likely to underrate its importance, in his "History of the Cotton Manufacture," estimates the total amount of capital vested in the cotton trade,—including that employed in the purchase of the raw material, in the payment of wages, and what is vested in spinning mills, power and hand-looms, workshops, warehouses, stock in trade, &c. &c.—at £34,000,000. M'Culloch has adopted the same estimate in his "Statistics," but Kennedy, and other high authorities, think it over-rated. So far, then, from the cotton party being able to furnish this compensation, we find that if all their engines, warehouses, factories, mills, and all the jennies, mules, and other "*going gear*," with which these are filled, were sold to-day at prime cost, they would not contribute the small sum of one shilling in the pound towards it. Compensation, then, appears to be quite out of the question.

The reader, we think, will now clearly understand, that any measure which would cause a reduction in the price of produce, would, by so doing, give in the same proportion an immense advantage to the monied interest, at the sole expense of the landed interest. A legislative enactment, therefore, which

might be designed to halve the price of produce, or double the value of money, ought properly to be entitled "AN ACT TO RAISE THE NATIONAL DEBT FROM EIGHT HUNDRED TO SIXTEEN HUNDRED MILLIONS, AND ALL PRIVATE DEBTS IN THE SAME RATIO." We shall now proceed to inquire, whether this would be a just and equitable measure.

The National Debt is, to all intents and purposes, a national mortgage, the interest of which we are as strongly bound to pay, as law and equity can bind us. The national mortgagee is as justly entitled to his reasonable claims as any labouring man in the kingdom is to the reward of his labour: the question of prudence or imprudence on the part of those who contracted the debt cannot in any way invalidate the contract: the money having been advanced, on the security of the national faith, for the defence and preservation of the liberty and property of every man in the empire.

A combination of unfortunate circumstances, which human foresight could neither circumvent nor foretell, and which were grappled with by men who for skill and ability were equal to any the world ever saw, allowed us no alternative, but either to resign ourselves to the dominion of a foreign foe, or contract a debt to maintain an effectual resistance.

The latter course having been adopted, and the struggle brought to a successful termination; and having since had the enjoyment of national tranquillity and prosperity, instead of suffering the contumely and oppression which a foreign usurper might have heaped on a conquered nation, we are bound, by every tie of honour and honesty, as well as by all the strength of parchment and seals, to respect the claims of those who have advanced us the means of securing the blessings of individual freedom, and the advantage of national independence. But although we are thus irrevocably bound to maintain an inviolate faith with the national creditor, there exists no reason why we

should voluntarily attempt to pay him twice as much as he can either desire or demand.

The national debt, as before stated, amounts in round numbers to £800,000,000; and we must bear in mind that there are incumbrances of a private nature to a large amount. It is stated on the authority of Sir Richard Philips, that the private mortgages were estimated, in the year 1825, at not less than £500,000,000. Besides this, there undoubtedly is a variety of other engagements, such as those before enumerated, to an immense extent. The Anti-Corn-Law Circular, No. 44, says, "the aggregate of the contracts subsisting between individuals, is far greater than that of the national debt." There can be little doubt, that the pecuniary engagements of a *private* nature amount to £1,200,000,000, which added to the public debt, makes the startling amount of £2,000,000,000. This is the *fixed* incubus that we call THE MONIED INTEREST. Now, if we suppose the rate of interest payable on this debt to be four per cent, we are responsible to the general creditor for £80,000,000 a-year, as interest.

The area of the United Kingdom is stated by M'Culloch, M'Queen, and others, to be between seventy-seven and seventy-eight millions of acres; so that, if the annual produce of each acre be £4 a-year, the mortgagee gets just one-fourth of it. But, if the price of that produce should be reduced to £2 per acre, the mortgagee will then get one-half.

Colonel Thompson is almost the only one of the Anti-Corn-Law party who has spoken of repeal with reference to the funds. In his book called "Corn-Law Fallacies and their Answers," he gives, as an answer to fallacy 71, the following :—

"The landlords made the Corn-Laws with the view, amongst other things, to rob the fundholders, who had lent money for the landlords' war, by paying them with less corn, and *they robbed them accordingly*. And then, the same landlords would persuade the community to continue to be starved, lest the fundholders should get their rights. Poor honest working men, you are sometimes accused of a desire to rob."

The principal part of the national debt was contracted during the French war. Now, Porter in his "Progress of the Nation," a book which the Leaguers highly extol, says, (Vol. 2. p. 293.)

"The average rate at which three per cent. stock was created, between 1793 and 1801, was £57 : 7 : 6 of money for £100 stock. Between 1803 and the termination of the war, the average price at which loans were contracted was £60 : 7 : 6."

so that the debt has been funded at something under par.

The average price of wheat for this period, namely, from 1793 to 1814, was 80*s* 6*d* per quarter. Any person, then, who lent Government £100 of three per cent. stock, advanced £60, or the equivalent of fifteen quarters of wheat. In like manner, if he had lent his money in four per cent. stock, he would have advanced £80, or twenty quarters of wheat, on the terms of receiving annually £4, or eight bushels of wheat, as interest. But, during the thirteen or fourteen years that the late Corn-Law was in operation, the price of wheat only averaged about 56*s* per quarter; therefore, the £4 annually paid to the fund-holder during these fourteen years, has been equivalent to eleven bushels of wheat, instead of eight, which he had agreed to receive. And, if the Corn-Law is to be entirely repealed, and the price of wheat thereby reduced to 30*s* per quarter, we shall then, if the national faith be maintained, have to pay the public creditor twenty-one bushels, instead of eight, as at first agreed upon.

The measures of last year, relating to the importation of corn, cattle, and provisions, will we believe have the ultimate effect of reducing the price of agricultural produce to half the price it bore during the French war, when the bulk of the debt was incurred. It is very well for newspaper writers, and members of parliament in after dinner speeches, to talk about "senseless panics," &c. causing the depression of prices, but let us have a little more experience, and we shall perhaps find, that the recent arrangements will not need much assistance from panics to enable them to bring down the price of wheat to 40*s* per quarter.

In many parts of England, wheat of fair quality is not worth more at this moment. But let the next summer be fine and the harvest favourable, and we shall be very much mistaken if excellent wheat cannot be bought before next Christmas, in any quantity, at 35*s* per quarter—and this independent of "*panics*."

The available price of wheat, to the farmer, throughout the kingdom is little if anything above 40*s* per quarter. And taking it at this, for the sake of the even number, the Acts of parliament recently called into existence are giving to the fundholder sixteen bushels of corn, when he originally agreed to take eight. We have already said, that when the national creditor lent us the money, he advanced £60 or the value of *fifteen* quarters of wheat, at the then current price of 80*s* per quarter, for every £100 of three per cent. stock. But if we should think proper to pay this creditor off, and have the means of doing so, we must employ the commissioners for the reduction of the national debt, who, at the present price of this stock, 95, and wheat at 40*s* per quarter, would have to give this creditor the equivalent of *forty-seven* quarters of wheat, although *fifteen* was the quantity first borrowed. As respects Colonel Thompson's charge against the landlords, of having "robbed the fundholder," we think it is pretty clear that they have regularly paid him his interest at the rate of 30*s* in the pound; they are about to pay him at 40*s*; and some propose to pay him even with 50*s* in the pound. And if any sweepings of the Exchequer could be spared at this time, to apply to the redemption of the principal, we should have to pay off this debt at the rate of something like 70*s* in the pound on the sum borrowed. Colonel Thompson, therefore, need not fret himself to death on account of any robbery that has been, or is likely to be committed on the fundholder at all events.

When we read the statements put forth by J. D. Hume, J. M'Greggor, R. Page, and others, about the Corn Laws operating as a *tax* upon the general industry of the nation to

the extent of 50,000,000*l.* a year, we are completely astounded. When M'Greggor and his very astute companions gave utterance to such opinions, they ought to have been led away by their friends, and made to go through a regular course of medical treatment, adapted for the recovery of the insane. And we do not say, that a similar course of treatment was not also needed by that score of notables who formed the memorable "Import Duties Committee," who could patiently listen to such ineffable nonsense.

Did no one ever inform John M'Greggor, Esq. and his sapient audience, that during the latter years of the war, the price of wheat averaged more than 5*l.* per quarter? And, if the price of 3*l.* per quarter for wheat operates as a tax of 50,000,000*l.* a year, what sort of a tax was the price of 5*l.* per quarter? But during these years the Government called upon us for the advance of more than 100,000,000*l.* annually. Yes! and we not only paid it, but the country continued at the same time in a comparatively thriving, and prosperous condition. And why? Because 20,000,000 quarters of wheat at 5*l.* per quarter then paid the 100,000,000*l.* required of us. Although the *nominal* amount of government taxes is now only one-half what it was in those years, yet the *real* amount is positively more; for the 45,000,000*l.* a year which we now pay, commands, in consequence of wheat being at 40*s.* per quarter, a larger share of the produce of our national industry than the 100,000,000, did then; because of wheat being at that time 5*l.* per quarter. If the Government were to call upon us now for so large a sum as 100,000,000*l.* a year, it would, with wheat at 40*s.* per quarter, require *fifty million quarters instead of twenty*. And with a free trade, and wheat at 1*l.* 10*s.* per quarter, it would take sixty-six millions of quarters to raise the sum. We easily paid one hundred millions a year, when wheat was 5*l.* per quarter, but we could no more

pay this amount with wheat at 30*s.* per quarter, than we could turn the earth from its course. For, we are now nearly beaten to pay 45,000,000*l.* although wheat is yet 2*l.* per quarter. If wheat were 4*l.* per quarter, as it ought to be with reference to our engagements with the fundholder, we could not only pay the interest of the debt, but we could pay a large portion of the principal every year, if necessary, and have comparative prosperity besides. Under an equitable arrangement we could meet our engagements and preserve our credit; but, we seem to prefer the course that leads only to bankruptcyand disgrace.

The conduct of the Anti-Corn Law party in Parliament seems to us the most extraordinary exhibition of the "penny-wise and pound-foolish," that has ever been seen or heard of. They will one day pertinaciously clamour for an Act to double our pecuniary obligations, of fifteen, eighteen, or twenty hundred millions, and the next, so extreme is their parsimony, that they will disgrace the nation in the eyes of all Europe by denying to their Sovereign the means of maintaining a respectable establishment in order to economise the beggarly sum of 10,000*l.* a year. The Humes, and the Wakleys, are equally applauded in their efforts to double the national debt, as in their desire to jeopardise the national security, by resisting the passing of the army and navy estimates, with the view of saving the odd shillings and pence on each of the several items. The wisdom and consistency of such conduct is utterly inexplicable to us. We can only compare it to the conduct of a celebrated miser of the last century, who would stake 5,000*l.* on the result of a horse-race at Newmarket, and then run the risk of breaking his neck on his way home, in order to save three half-pence by evading the toll-bar.

The reader, we trust, will now clearly understand, how it is, that halving the price of produce would be tantamount to

doubling the national, and other fixed debts. And, we trust, he is also fully convinced, that such a step would be giving an unjust, and an unbearable, advantage, to the MONIED INTEREST at the expense of the LANDED INTEREST.

The fundholder may secretly encourage the Anti-Corn-Law mania, thinking that a repeal of the Corn-Law would enhance the value of his property; but, the doubling of eighty millions a year is no trifle. John Bull, though proverbially submissive, might turn restive, and a violent political convulsion dislodge the burden altogether. When the landlord shall find his property wholly, or partially, confiscated, and the farmer be nearly ruined, we may then have Anti-National Debt leagues, as bold and as clamorous, as we now have Anti-Corn-Law leagues. Several schemes have been resorted to, in order to reduce the *interest* of some of the minor stocks,—and a day may come, when the equity, the expediency, or the necessity, of reducing the *principal* may be successfully urged; the eight hundred millions may be reduced to six hundred, the six hundred to four hundred, the four hundred to two hundred. If a cleft be once made in the fabric, not an atom of it is secure. If the sponge be once used, who is to trace out the line of demarcation beyond which it shall not be applied? Foreign aggression, leaguing clamour, or financial embarrassment, may furnish a necessity to back the inclination of a revolutionary government, in refusing to acknowledge the fundholders' claims, and the incubus so long talked about would then inevitably vanish in the bloody turmoil of a civil war.

No one can be more desirous to maintain the national faith inviolate than we are, but at the same time we should never be willing to pay 50*s.* in the pound, when only 20*s.* can legally and equitably be demanded. We have yet considerable doubt, whether we can, as a community, meet our engagements under the present arrangements. The evil tendency of the late altera-

tions have not yet been fully developed. The devastating effect of taking £1 per quarter from the price of the farmer's wheat, and reducing his other produce in proportion, has not yet been seen. Let us wait another year, and we shall be much mistaken, if the wreck and ruin to be occasioned by the changes of last year are not then manifest enough.

An opinion has become current in some quarters, that we are to be compelled, not only to endure the present measure of injustice, but that our burthens are to be materially increased, either by imposing a low fixed duty on corn, or by repealing the Corn Law altogether. If we are to have a total repeal, the end will be immediate. In the other case, our dissolution might be gradual. Politically speaking, we should prefer a sudden death to a lingering one. Better to die at once on the block, than linger on the rack. We are quite sure, we could not exist under a low fixed duty: and, whenever that measure shall be proposed, we implore every man who may read this, to go at once for *total* repeal although it would be the certain prelude to revolution. Let him petition, and use his might in every other way, to procure an entirely free trade, although a general disruption of society would be the consequence. The national writhings and convulsions would be fearful enough, but in this way revival would be more certain and speedy. The public creditor, and the rest of the party forming the monied interest, rather than risk the sacrifice of their property altogether, would, we are sure, submit to a more equitable arrangement, so that the vessel of state might speedily be righted We are the last in the world to propose, or advocate a breach of faith with the public creditor; we would pay so long as any chance of doing so remained, but we would not attempt palpable impossibilities.

It may perhaps be said, the Government have no alternative, —that the Leaguers are gathering in Manchester five or ten

thousand strong, and a thousand of them are about to assemble at the doors of Parliament, to intimidate the Government in their very seats of office; and repeal has therefore become a matter of *expediency*. If this argument is to have its weight, it appears that the landed interest are to be sacrificed, because they have not acted in a similar manner. Because the landed interest have not expended one hundred and fifty thousand pounds in hiring professional agitators, and bribing the public press, to foment revolutionary indications, by exciting the minds of the people against the established laws of the land, they are to be sacrificed to those who have done so.

At the "Conference of Ministers" which assembled in Manchester to agitate, as previously described, the following notable scheme was suggested by one of that body. The Reverend T. Spencer, of Hinton, near Bath:—a minister of the Church of England (with shame be it said) and better known at Cambridge for his misanthropic, than his philanthropic reputation. This *reverend* gentleman, having quoted a portion of Scripture relating to the fall of the walls of Jericho, said:

"I would have 1000 persons selected to march through the streets of London to effect the downfall of the citadel of corruption. I would not, said he, have the people of London selected for such a march—people who are given to admire sights, and shows, and the next moment are to be found in the gin shops. They are not the men. I have no confidence in such men as can be found in the streets of London. I say, take 1000 men out of the streets of Manchester (cheers.) Let a portion of the ten thousand pounds just got by the bazaar be properly applied for that purpose. Make an agreement with the railway directors,—have a special train—land them in the streets of London,—marshal them properly, and put into their hands banners, bearing the inscription 'Free Trade,' and 'No Corn-Laws, (loud cheers.) Let them be engaged to stay in London a fortnight, or a month, if the funds will allow it; let them march every day in the front of the houses of those persons who uphold or advocate this monopoly. Let every man be furnished with an Anti-Corn Law trumpet, and march round the walls of the House of Commons seven times. (Loud cheers and waving of hats.) And, as they march through the streets of London, let them every now and then make a solemn pause, and as some people in London will be taken by sights, let these men show their ragged dresses and white faces, and let some of the best among them make a speech. I think, before many weeks had gone by, these Anti-Corn Law trumpets would cause the walls of monopoly to fall down flat."

Now, if agitation be fair for one party it is for another. If it be right, that the cotton conspirators should assemble in

Palace-yard or elsewhere, to bully and threaten violence to the Government, if they do not repeal the Corn Laws,—it is also right, that the landed party should assemble in a place equally near and convenient, and threaten similar violence to the Government, if they do repeal the Corn Laws. If we had the means that some people have, the Government should have agitation pretty equally on both sides. If Cobden had his troop of delegates on one side, we would have a similar number on the other. If the Reverend T. Spencer were to have his 1000 men with *Anti*-Corn law trumpets marching on one side of the House of Commons, we would have our 1000 men with *Pro*-Corn law trumpets following them on the other. If he and his party threatened to bring the "walls" of Parliament "down flat" if the Corn Laws were not repealed, we on the other side would threaten the same consequences if they were repealed; and between us we should make a mess of it.

If the principle of agitation is to be recognised, and even patronised, by Government, as it has been; and, if the deliberations of the senate are henceforth to be controlled by the party who shall be most successful in sowing discontent and sedition among the people, then is the crown of these realms not worth twelve months purchase. When a certain member of the late Administration called, as he repeatedly did, for public agitation, he ought to have been whipped from pillar to post throughout the kingdom, so long as one "honest hand" could be found vigorous enough to raise the lash against him.

We do not hesitate to affirm our belief, that a revolution is impending over this country, and will ere long take place without timely steps are taken to avert it. However such an event might be deplored, (and we are sure all well meaning people would agree that it could never be too much deplored;) if anything could tend to mitigate the universal regret that would be felt at such a state of things coming to pass, it would

be, the certain assurance that the party who had been immediately instrumental in bringing it about would be the first to suffer its dreadful consequences. We can desire no stronger proof that such would be the case, than was afforded to us by the outbreak which took place in the manufacturing districts last year. Although it is now pretty well understood that the riots of last August were caused by the Anti-Corn Law League; yet when the restraints of the law were thrown off did the working classes lend their assistance to promote the object of the League? We are not aware that they did this in one instance; and we carefully read the League's own paper, the *Manchester Guardian,* during the whole of that affair. No, so far to the contrary, that even this paper stated that the first step which the rioters took, was to denounce the selfish motives, and the unfeeling conduct of their "*Corn Law repealing masters.*" At the various meetings of Trades Delegates which took place at that time, did any one of them propose to join the Leaguers' conspiracy? No, instead of joining them, the operatives reprobated the Leaguers and their motives in the severest language. The conduct of the operatives in the manufacturing districts, shewed in this instance, that they were not altogether ignorant of the character and motives of their "Corn Law repealing masters:" and this occasion furnished us with the strongest proof, that revolutionary vengeance would first be directed to the party who had been mainly instrumental in bringing it about.

The task which we proposed to ourselves, at the commencement of these observations, was to show in the first part, *that the party from which the Anti-Corn Law League has been formed, instead of being remarkable for their humane and liberal conduct to the labouring poor, have uniformly been distinguished for their rapacious and brutal cruelty towards them:—That the principal object of the manufacturers in seeking for repeal is, to increase*

their own gains by reducing the wages of those very men whose privations they already pretend to commiserate. That the dangerous and unconstitutional association called the Anti-Corn Law League was contrived, and is carried on, for the purpose of decoying the labouring poor into the cheap-labour trap, and exciting them to become the willing instruments of their own destruction.

And, in the second part, to give a short view of what we conceive to be the true principles of national or political economy, and incidentally to shew THE CONSEQUENCES THAT WOULD RESULT FROM A FREE TRADE IN CORN.

In this division we have carefully abstained from noticing any of the arguments usually brought forward in discussing the Corn Laws; and our reason for doing so is this. We intended from the first to dedicate the whole to a particular individual, and in such a manner as might occasion the necessity of our going into the subject more at length hereafter. Several premises or principles have probably been advanced in the latter part of our observations, which the reader will either disbelieve, or not exactly concur in. But, if the occasion should arise which we have just alluded to, the unreasonable assumptions will perhaps be pointed out, and we may then have an opportunity of explaining ourselves more fully.

TO WILLIAM RATHBONE GREG, Esq.

Sir,—Without obtaining the usual permission, I have ventured to dedicate this small publication to you. I do so, because many things contribute to render you one of the most conspicuous members of the Anti-Corn Law League. You were, I believe, one of the first, and have continued to be one of its principal subscribers. You are, I understand, an extensive cotton manufacturer, and in that pursuit are supposed to have acquired great wealth. You are known to possess extensive information on this question, and have obtained, against forty competitors, one of the three prizes given by the Anti-Corn Law League for the best Essays in favour of the Repeal of the Corn Laws. I accompany this dedication with a challenge to a controversy on the policy or impolicy of establishing a Free-trade in Corn.

In taking this step I am impelled by no feeling of personality, nor by any desire to gain public notoriety. I have as strong a belief that the measures which you advocate would be destructive to the best interests of this country, as you can possibly have that they would be beneficial to them; and if you should think proper to notice this appeal in the manner I propose, I should have no other wish than that reason and truth might prevail. Paper wars are often inconclusive and sometimes offensive, but I desire nothing of this kind. My proposal would be, that you should give one, two, or three reasons why the Corn Laws ought to be repealed, and I, at the same time, would give an equal number of reasons why they ought not to be repealed. After this each should reply to what the

other had advanced, and there the matter be ended—the public judging between us. The only condition I should insist upon would be, that you, as a member of the League, should first show that your motives are pure, or, as Mr. Cobden has often said, that your "hands are clean." Prove that you have no desire to reduce your labourers' wages, and that the leaders of your party have never advocated a repeal of the Corn Laws on these grounds. The labourers who are taught to clamour for "*cheap bread*" have, I conceive, a right to know whether such men as Messrs. Hume, Villiers, Philips, and others, to whom they entrust their petitions for it, have ever declared that "cheap bread" is sought for by the manufacturer as a means of *reducing the cost of labour*.

You will perhaps desire to know who and what I am. My name will appear on the first page of this pamphlet and my residence can easily be ascertained if required. In politics I belong to a class now all but extinct—the back-bone Tories: but although I am nearly the last of the race, I will neither disown my principles nor shrink from the odium that the "March of Intellect" or modern cant may heap upon them.

I do not know that there is any thing improper in my addressing you in this manner; you have appeared as a public defender of the Corn Law League, and have proved yourself one of its most vigorous champions. You reside almost in the very citadel of the League, therefore all the tons of argument put forth by that body would be immediately available to aid your own great facility of writing, and extensive knowledge of the subject,—so that if any person can fight a battle of this kind successfully, it is yourself. Therefore to you, William Rathbone Greg, in preference to any other person, this work is dedicated, and this challenge is addressed, by

THE AUTHOR.